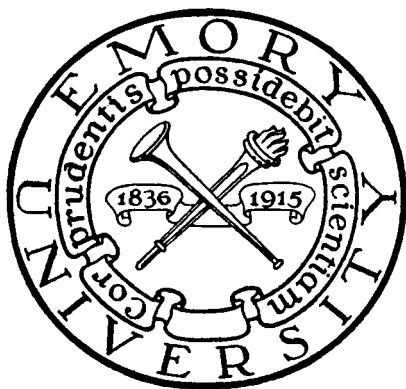


**THE
BEAUTIFUL JEWESS
OR THE
YOUNG SAILOR'S TRIUMPH.**



CAMERON & FERGUSON. GLASGOW & LONDON.

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CHAPTER I.

ONE evening in August, not many years ago, a young man was seated in the bay-window of a fashionable hotel on Broadway, smoking a cigar and idly gazing upon the passers by. He was about two-and-twenty, with a face which would have been handsome but for the paleness of dissipation. He was fashionably attired, with a profusion of rings and jewellery. There was a self-confident, vain expression upon his effeminately regular features; and the way he wore his natty hat, and whipped his patent leather boots, raised level with his breast upon the green cloth of the table, showed that he had a listless and foppish character, and was, on the whole, a fast young man about town. Yet his eyes were not wholly inexpressive or undirected. They had an earnest, searching look, especially when a young girl with a graceful figure glided past with hastened steps, attired in plain dress and half-veiled bonnet; and there were many such.

The young smoker watched for the pretty faces.

He has his counterpart in every hotel and restaurant window, and at every corner of Broadway, to-day: the wolves and the sheep, the devourer and the victim. these two will halve the world for all time, as they have done in all time. There are certain men who forget they had mothers and sisters, and who have no faith in female virtue and in the chastity of penurious beauty. They imagine that female distress, destitution of loveliness, beauty in trouble, is ever ready to buy itself out, or sell itself for gold, into a better fortune, by the sacrifice of the only glory she possesses outside of gold—her personal honour! These depraved minds have read somewhere in the writings of one who was "Prince of Vices," "that every woman has her price." Such a maxim is as infamous to the author of it as it is degrading to the human race. The true heart of lust is in man, not in woman—who is ever the tempted and deceived.

Spence Spinker, the young man in the window, is a clerk in the post office. He has a salary of six hundred a year, yet spends two thousand. He keeps his horse and buggy, boards at the "Carlton," at two dollars a day, and keeps an expensive mistress—a young wife, whose husband had become so intemperate and abusive, that she fled from him to a (if possible) lower degradation, in some sort, independence and freedom—horrible liberty! the liberty of one who removes a golden link from the finger, to be bound, body and soul, in chains formed of links of iron—of iron made red hot, which burns to the soul.

The post office clerk smoked and watched. At length a young and graceful form flitted past in the

glare of the street lamp. She moved swiftly, but with an air of high breeding which struck him. Underneath her arm she carried a sort of satchel or portfolio. He caught a glimpse of her face, which "was charming," as he expressed it to himself half audibly. She was superior in appearance to the ordinary sempstresses and booksewing girls, and flower-girls who passed; and he was seized with a desire to know more of her. He rose at once and descended to the street. By degrees he came up with her, and passed her under a lamp which lent its light to his impudence, and revealed the blooming face of a lovely girl of eighteen. She saw that he gazed intently upon her, and turned her face aside, and hurried on. He understood at a glance that she was modest, and not of those miserable and ruined girls who traverse the streets under the shadows of night answering every glance from men. But this did not deter him from pursuit; but further added zest to his desires; and when he saw her turn into a side-street to the left, south of Bleecker, he followed her into the dimly-lighted and narrow avenue, which led to the less-fashionable parts of the city.

He now hastened to overtake her, to address her, when she suddenly disappeared down an area of a small two-storey house in a part of the street inhabited chiefly by poor people.

"I have her," he said exultingly. "She is poor and she is beautiful!. That is enough for a man like me; one who can command any amount of money. I can buy her; that is certain. Let me see! a long row of two-storey houses! A baker's cart and three drays in front! Here is a sign where they sell 'milk and vegetables'; and another where washing is done out;

and there is a third, where 'Peter Black, a coloured man, performs whitewashing and day's work done on the premises; also boots cleaned to order.' What can so lovely a creature do in this vile *quartier*, as the French would call it!"

As he spoke, he descended three or four steps into a basement dimly lighted by a bit of tallow candle stuck into the neck of a beer-bottle. Upon a bench sat a grey headed negro in green goggles, engaged in polishing a boot, and singing, by way of accompaniment:

"I'm boun' for de Jordan ribber,
I'm boun' for de Jordan ribber
An' Jeru-sa-lem!"

He looked up as the fashionably-attired Spence Spinker entered, and said, with a nod and a glance at his shoes:

"Sarvan', Mars'r! Clean 'em shoes?"

"Patent leathers, old man!"

"Sartain sure. I sees dey be. What young gemman want? any whitewashin'?"

"Yes, Peter. I want you to bring your brushes and pail to-morrow and whitewash the board fence around the Carlton House."

"Sartain to do dat, sure, Mars's! Not'in' nebber take dis nigger's whitewash off but de rain. Sorry Mars'r hab patin' lethers. Dis fashion kill all poor nigger shoe-blacks, same as painters kill de whitewash trade."

"Who lives in the house over your head, Uncle Peter?"

"Up dar? Why bress us, dat is Mistress Mary."

"And who is Mistress Mary?"

"De moder ob young Missis Maggy."

"And who is Miss Maggy?"

"Lor'! Jiss as ef you don't know, whin yer seed her go in just now afore ye. I seed young Mars'r come home wid her, an' I thought yer come down here to get yer boots cleaned afore yer went in; coz, yer see, its been a mighty bressed rainy day. We boot-blacks bress de Lor' for rainy wedders. Don't know Missy Maggy?"

"Only saw her go in there into the area, Peter. Who is she?"

"Wall, she jiss an angel! She mighty purty. She make pictures, and her ma sew and make pictures, too, wid de needle, mighty fine. Rain wont wash 'em out. Dey done in de grain, like."

"Is her mother poor?"

"Sure nuff poor. She a widdur, and widdurs is poor. I hope you'll be willin' to help her. She ken make de most handsomest shirts and vests and collars and her da'ter Maggy ken work 'em elegant wid de needle—"

"Are there but the two?" asked Spinker, interrupting the old man in his eloquent laudations.

"Now, answer me. Who lives with the widow? Is there any man about?"

This last inquiry was dictated by that cowardice which always lurks in the soul of every evil-minded man, especially the seducer."

"Dar free ob 'em."

"Who is the third?"

"Mars'r Wallace."

"Who is he?"

"Her brodder."

"How old is he?"

"Wall, about—about—I doesn't know 'zactly, but I guess he am half a head taller dan your own self. He de older brudder."

"Humph! What does he do?"

"Wall, he in de pos' offiss, dey says."

"What did you say his name was?"

"Mars'r Wallace."

"Wallace—Wallace. I don't know such a name," repeated Spinker.

"How long has he been there?"

"Only about two or three weeks."

"That may be. There are two or three new clerks," he said to himself, "but none of this name, that I recollect. There is Wyndham, Smith, and Paget. What is the full name of the woman who lives over you?"

"Win'am, young Mars'r."

"Wyndham?"

"And—but that is enough. I have no more to ask," he said, abruptly going up the steps.

Spence Spinker entered the area-alley, and knocked at the side-door on the right. He knocked boldly and confidently. He knew that if this were the abode of the new clerk, Wallace Wyndham, the latter was a mile and a half off in the post office; and he resolved that if the fair girl was his sister that he would see her.

The first knock was not answered, and he knocked again, louder than before.

While he waits for a response, we will precede him into the humble house. It was one of those plain, obscure, but not infamous abodes where the respectable poor find refuge in the heart of the great city, which is built up for poverty's shelter as well as for

wealth's display. There is a little entry, with a door opening into a room on each side, and a pair of narrow steps leading to two small rooms above.

In one of these cramped upper rooms a candle was burning. The young girl, when she had entered, had passed up the angular stairs into the south room, where sat a pale but lady-like matron, dressed in faded black. She was sewing by a small table, on which were placed a loaf, and plates and cups and saucers for three. At the fire-place, on a bed of coals, stood a teapot.

"Well, dear mother, I've come," said the young girl, pleasantly. She threw aside her straw bonnet, and revealed a face of singular beauty, but pale and care-worn. As she spoke, she laid down the portfolio upon a chair, and, approaching her mother, kissed her, and added:

"I hope you are well, and have not worked too hard to-day?"

"I am better, Magdalene," answered the mother, looking up with affection; "yet I confess I am very weary, for if this work is not done by nine o'clock to-night, it will neither be received nor paid for."

"I know it, and I tried to hasten home to help you, sweet mother; but the picture I drew had to be altered in several places after it was done, as Mr Fickle changed his plans, and so it caused me double work; and instead of getting home at three o'clock, as I supposed I should do, it is now after dark; and it was so unpleasant coming home so late through the crowded streets alone."

"You are fatigued with your long walk."

"No, only invigorated by the fresh air; for the wind

blew freely in the streets. I will not eat supper till Wallace comes; we dislike so to have to eat alone."

"It is so hard that my children have to toil when they should be enjoying themselves," said Mrs Wyndham, as she relinquished her seat to her daughter, who, however, first glanced in a little looking-glass to arrange her beautiful hair; for she was, we must confess, not a little vain of her beauty, as well she might be, so long as she could be so innocently; for beauty is the gift of God.

"Alas!" sighed the widow, as she went to a lounge and reclined, overcome with her labours of the day. "Alas, that one unfortunate step of my early life. But for that I should now, with my children, have been in affluence and ease. But the judgment of God, who has commanded children to 'honour their parents,' have followed me in retribution to this hour."

Suddenly there was a knock at the door below.

"It is not Wallace—it is too soon!" said Magdalene, listening.

The knock was repeated, and the door of the room below opened, and the old Irish widow was heard asking, sharply:

"Who is afther bein' there at the door?"

"I wish to see Mrs Wyndham?"

"Ah! and it's up-stair she's beein'! Take thim steps an' ye'll be afther comin' to her door. Ho! Mistress Windim? There's a young gentleman at the door bees afther spakin' wid ye! Open the door, and let him see a bit o' the candle-light."

The clerk hesitated lest he should fall into a snare; but trusting to his innate coolness and impudence if

he should place himself in a false position by the sudden return (not by any means to be expected for an hour) of Wallace Wyndham, he ascended the confined stairs, aided by a candle held in the fair hand of the fair portfolio bearer!

CHAPTER II.

THE sight of a fashionably-attired and rather handsome young man appearing upon the landing before the door, caused the maiden, who was holding a candle to see who it was coming up, to start back with a slight exclamation of surprise and girlish shame; and especially when she recognized in him the gentleman she had seen following her in the street; for the attentions of Spence Spinker had not been unremarked by her.

"Do not be alarmed!" he said, in his most persuasive tones. "I called to see your brother? Is he in?"

"No, sir!" she answered, embarrassed; while her mother said:

"Ask the gentleman in, if he is an acquaintance of Wallace's!"

"Will you come in? But my brother will not be at home for an hour."

"Then I will wait for him!" answered the visitor, coolly entering the small, plain room and taking a chair, first bowing very politely to Mrs Wyndham. "Pardon me, madam! I only wished to see my friend Wallace a few minutes. A noble young man, madam. They think everything of him in the post office, I hear. And I have heard him speak of you, Miss

Wyndham, as his only sister. He may well be proud of you! I should be, if I had so lovely a sister! He has frequently expressed a wish that I should become acquainted with you; and so, in fact, to tell the truth, I came expressly this evening. But I see I am too early."

"We are glad to see you, sir," said Mrs Wyndham. "I regret Wallace is out."

All the while, the young man kept his eyes fastened upon the graceful figure and fair face of the young girl, with open and bold admiration. Spinker's eyes also inspected the poverty of the things in the room.

"They must be mightily straightened," he reflected within himself; "I see that they embroider and work; and I daresay he half supports his mother and sister. So much the better for a man who has money like me."

He then said, aloud, seeing that his presence was not wholly without embarrassment to them:

"I see you draw, Miss? Is this your portfolio?"

"I am a poor artist. I draw and colour houses and plans for architects, sometimes," she answered.

"These are very pretty, indeed. You embroider, too, I see."

"A little."

"If you were my sister, I would not let those lovely fingers do harder work than playing the harp or guitar."

"Poverty knows no laws, young sir," answered Mrs Wyndham, rather quickly. "If Wallace had not by the most wonderful chance in the world got into the post office, we should have had no house to live in."

"Ah! How was it?" asked Spinker, feeling a sort of growing contempt for the family which was so

ready to confess its poverty, yet no less resolved to try and get the lovely daughter into his power.

"Wallace went to sea when he was quite a lad, and was gone till he was eighteen. He then came home, finding me a widow. He brought with him five hundred dollars, which he had saved up; but he also brought home with him a constitution broken by the yellow fever. It was two years before he was perfectly well and able to do anything. By that time, what with educating his sister, the money was all expended. We had some debts, too, small ones, but as troublesome to the poor as large ones to the rich. He now tried to get a situation; for he did not wish to go to sea and leave me and his sister alone. But he did not know anything about selling goods; he had no trade; he was no bookkeeper; all he had available was a good writing-hand. He got tired and broken-spirited waiting for and searching for employment, as well as ashamed; for both of us could get something to do. He felt too proud; for you know how manly and high-spirited he is—and well may he be, for he comes of good blood—and he at last made up his mind to go to sea again; for he could ship easily, and leave his bounty with us, he said, and perhaps would come home in a year or two rich.

"Well, he did ship, and got eighteen dollars in advance, and brought it to me. I felt that it was the price of my son's life; and we wept at the necessity which compelled him to take this money; for it was needed by us to make out our rent. He took leave of us after tea, and said he was going on board that night, as the ship, which was bound for Trieste, was to sail at the first ebb at daybreak,

“While an hour afterward we were seated together, lamenting his absence, and wondering how long it would be before we should see him again, if ever, the door suddenly opened, and he stood before us! We both started up with cries of mingled pleasure and alarm; for we saw that his forehead was tied up with a bandage saturated with blood. To our eager and terrified inquiries, he answered, smiling and embracing us:

“‘It is not much of a hurt, only a slight wound. But I saved the life of a gentleman by receiving it.’

“‘How? who?’ we exclaimed, after we had made him sit down.

“‘I had got,’ he said, ‘to the corner of Walker Street and Broadway, when, as I lingered a moment to decide whether I should go straight to the vessel, or keep on awhile in Broadway, and so cross the Park to South Street, a gentleman, with a young girl leaning upon his arm, passed me, and turned down Walker Street in the direction of the Bowery. The momentary glimpse I had of his face showed a Jewish physiognomy, and the gray locks that he was past fifty; while a ray of light illuming the face of the young girl, revealed one of the most beautiful countenances I ever beheld. Scarcely had they turned down the street, than two men turned and proceeded after them.

“‘I could see the forms of the two men close to those in advance, and was hurrying to pass them, when I heard a shriek, and then the shout of a man’s voice calling, “Help! help!” followed by blows and a struggle. In a moment I was at the spot, and with the stick on which my bundle was slung, I laid about

me upon the heads of the two men right and left, one of whom held the young girl, and was trying to stop her cries with his hand, while the other was rifling the pockets of the man who had been knocked down. At the first blow I gave, the fellow released the young girl, and struck me with a slung-shot over the eye; but the blow glanced, and did not knock me down, though it made me reel; but I handled my stick so well that both fellows were prostrate. Between each stroke I shouted "Police!" but I conquered the field alone. Hastening to raise the old man, I found he was insensible; while his daughter, believing him dead, gave vent to the wildest grief. The police now came up, and opening their dark-lanterns, surveyed the field. Upon the crossing, in the middle of the street, lay one of the men, bleeding from wounds in his head; while the other was trying to crawl away in the darkness. I informed the police of their doings, who at once took them into custody, while a hack was sent for by one of the officers to convey the old gentleman home; for he knew him as Solomon Moncure, the richest Jew in the city. By the time the hack arrived he had revived; and his daughter, telling him what services I had done, he insisted I should go and see them home in the carriage.

"I will not attempt to describe to you the gratitude which the father and daughter showed me. The police-officer said that it was important I should be detained on shore as a witness; and Mr Moncure (for I told them I had shipped as a sailor) said he would pay back, in the morning, to the shipping-office my advance, while the law would take the responsibility of keeping me on shore. There was also a fine-looking,

dark-haired young man, the brother of Miss Moncure, who expressed to me his gratitude for the service I had done his father."

"Quite a romantic story," said Spinker, "'pon my word; quite an affair, to be sure. A brave fellow, that brother of yours. I believe I will bid you good-night. It is rather late. He may be detained by some other romantic adventure. I believe I will not wait any longer."

"Whom shall I say, to my brother, called?"

"Bless me, did I not give my name? Ah-h-h, Smith—Mr Jonas Smith. Good evening."

Thus speaking, the fast post office clerk bowed himself out and groped his way down stairs, and so reached the street, fearing each moment he should encounter the brave brother.

While he was thus meditating and swinging his rattan as he moved along, he was met by a well-made firm-stepping young man who passed him under a lamp, with a slight nod of recognition. It was Wallace Wyndham going home.

"But he never will suspect who it is," said Spinker, speaking aloud his thoughts after he had gone by. "They will tell him that it was a Mr Smith. I left just in time. I have got all I want—a first acquaintance with his beautiful sister; a strikingly pretty creature. Yet she has just vanity enough and just pride enough for a fall, if I play my hand skilfully. Confound this brother. If he were at sea, where he ought to be, but for rich old Moncure, the coast would be clear. They would be poor as penury, and my money would then—"

"What do you mean, sirrah?" saluted his ears at

this instant from a young and elegant-looking man who was on the steps of a club-house smoking (for he was now on Broadway), and whose cigar the rotatory motion of the rattan of Spinker had sent flying through the air with a train of sparks after it.

"Beg pardon—beg pardon, Mr Ravenel," cried Spinker, quickly, and with cringing deference. "Did not see you, sir."

"Make better use of your eyes another time," haughtily responded the other, turning his back on Spinker, who, with his hat in his hand, was pouring out the most sycophantic and astounding apologies.

Without noticing him further, the young man of fashion ascended the steps with a friend, and entered the club-house—that forbidden ground to Spinker, the *terra incognita* to the class he belonged to; for Spinker, without means or associations to live in style, aspired to be a young man of fashion, and was ambitious to be thought to be intimate with really tonnish and opulent young men, like Guy Ravenel and his aristocratic set; fancying that plenty of money to spend and fashionable attire were all that was necessary to introduce a person into this coveted circle. Guy Ravenel was born to wealth, and reared in the lap of luxury. His position was natural to him; and he moved in it easily and familiarly, and as a matter of course. He drove fast horses, kept superb equipages, lived stylishly up town, and his social status was recognised by all.

He was the model on which Spinker endeavoured to form himself. As well might the hack-horse strive in the race with the full-blooded racer.

The next day, after passing a sleepless night at

having angered so great a personage, he bought a box of cigars, and despatched it with the following note:—

“CARLTON, AUGUST, 184—.

“SIR,—Assuring you that I painfully regret the accident resulting from my extreme and unpardonable awkwardness, and for which I herewith desire humbly to present and make my apologies, I beg you will do me the high honour to accept, as atonement for the loss of your cigar, and as in some slight degree an *amende honourable* from one who has the highest respect for you, and would do nothing intentionally to forfeit your esteem, the accompanying box of cigars which cost forty dollars; trusting that this little contretemps may not interpose to our friendship, and to the consideration which I hold you and all the members of your distinguished and truly aristocratic club. Again reassuring you that it was quite an accident, and that this may lead to our better acquaintance,

“I am, sir, my dear Mr Ravenel, your most obedient humble servant, with all consideration,

“SPENCE SPINKER,

“C. House, Room 112, Broadway.

“*To G. R., Esq., I Club.*”

When the footman laid the box and note on the table in Mr Ravenel's smoking room the next morning, the latter, who, in his *robe de chambre* of rich brocade, was just taking his coffee and reading the paper, said, quietly: “What is here, John?”

“A box and a letter, yer arnor, jis' left at the door.”

“Cut the string and remove the paper. What! a box of Isabella cigars. Let me see what the note says? I don't know the writing. Ah! what! Phœbus,

What is this? Spinker, Spinker. That must be the fellow who imitates me, and who—but let us read.”

When Mr Ravenel had read the letter quite through once, he looked puzzled, and again he perused it more carefully, as if he would get at the meaning. He then threw his head back, and laughed with a merriment that John's risibles could not resist, and he also burst out into an ill-suppressed Irish guffaw.

“This is excellent,” at length said Ravenel. “What a brainless fellow that Spinker is, and what a sap-head; was ever such a born ass? The fellow's vanity and folly are insufferable. Confound his cigars, and note, and him, too; or rather, all three. Because I have sometimes answered a civil question at the stables while he has intruded upon me while waiting for my horses, or because he has picked up my whip for me, he presumes upon an acquaintance with me. The fellow may be clever enough in his own set, if he would have sense enough to keep there; but he is an ass trying to pass off for a lion, and his hoofs stick out, while his bray is anything but a roar—a pure bray. I will give him his quietus. Wait, John.”

Seizing a pen, he thus wrote:

“SIR,—Enclosed, please find a cheque for forty dollars and eighty cents. But, for the future, I prefer employing my own agent in the purchase of my cigars. The eighty cents are added for commission, at two per cent. If you propose opening a cigar-shop, I wish you success. The sample you send is a very fair one.

“I am, your obedient servant,

“GUY RAVENEL.

“*To Mr Spence Spinker, Cigar-dealer, 112 Broadway.*”

"John, take this note to the bearer, if he is in waiting."

The young aristocrat then, with a smile of contempt for the small game which had crossed his path, resumed his coffee and toast, and listlessly read the news. Suddenly he looked up, hearing a step.

"Ah, Sister Kate, good morning. You are up early."

The person thus addressed was a tall young lady, elegantly attired in a riding-habit of green cloth, with a black velvet hat enriched with dark green plumes which shaded her richly-flushed cheeks.

"Early. Why, it is past eleven o'clock. I have been out on horseback for two hours. These horrid clubs. They turn night into day. You have no idea of the freshness of the morning."

"Oh yes, I have. Who rode with you this morning?"

"My riding-teacher, for want of your escort."

"That musn't be. I will go with you to-morrow."

"Will you? Oh, I am so delighted."

"At what hour?"

"Seven."

"Very good. Now read that letter."

When she had ended, he said:

"What do you think of the writer?"

"That he was your slave whom you had whipped, and who wished to be reconciled. Is he not what they call a toady?"

"That is it. He by accident hit my cigar with a switch, and hence these lachrymæ."

"How did you reply?"

"By sending him a check for the cigars."

"How coldly and proudly you can sometimes act. You ought to have been more merciful."

"It was necessary. How superbly you look," he added, surveying her through his eye-glass; "I really believe a pretty woman looks prettier in her riding-costume than in any other. Sit down and take a cup of coffee with me."

And leaving brother and sister to their matinée, we will return to Wallace Wyndham.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the brother of Magdalene Wyndham entered the room up-stairs, about twenty minutes after Spinker had taken his departure, he was met with the exclamation by her:

"What a pity you didn't come a little sooner, brother."

"He has not been gone half an hour; he got tired waiting," said his mother.

"I am quite bewildered. Who has been here?" he asked, with a fine smile on his frank and handsome face. "Who have I missed seeing?"

"Your friend, Mr Jones."

"No, mother, Mr Smith."

"Which is it?" asked Wallace, looking from one to the other, amused, and not a little wondering.

"It was Mr Jonas Smith," said Magdalene. "He was so finely dressed, and was so agreeable, and said he was your particular friend."

"Indeed! I don't know a Mr Jones Smith. I never heard of the name."

"He said," persevered Mrs Wyndham, "that you

were so well spoken of in the post office by everybody, and he praised you so highly, I took quite a fancy to him—though, at first, I didn't like him, his face didn't please me, and he wore too much jewellery. He had a great red ring, shaped like a heart, on his forefinger, and two gold watch-seals—one like a fish and the other like a cross."

"White kid gloves, and a cane, and gold chain," added Magdalene.

The brother continued shaking his head:

"I don't know of such a person."

"Do not? Did you never ask him to come with you and be introduced to me? A slim, and rather short young man. Didn't you praise me to him?"

"No."

"This is very strange. He said so."

"Then, he is a villain! I don't know a man of the name. I never invited anybody to come and see you; and I have never praised you to any one. Yes, once I did to a gentleman, but that was not his name, and he would not come here."

"Who was he, Wallace, you praised me to?" asked his sister, with a slight air of natural vanity.

"It was a Mr Ravenel—one of the wealthiest young men in this city. You know, at the last yacht-race, the owners of the yachts advertised for young sailors. I did not let you know it, but I applied and was three days with him, most of the time in his yacht, trying her in the Bay and beyond the Capes. He took quite a liking to me. But it couldn't have been that gentleman, who does not wear jewellery; and he is taller than I am. Was this person like him?"

"Not at all."

"Then this man, Jones or Smith, was imposing on you. I know no such person. What did he say?"

"That he came to see you. He waited half an hour."

"Perhaps it is all right. Did he say he was coming again?"

"Yes."

"I should like to be at home. Did you say much to him?"

"No; not much."

After a few minutes he said: "I am wholly at a loss to understand who it could be. But let us have tea."

His blue eyes, frank and fearless; his light brown locks, freely curling about his temples; his well-shaped head, with a brow full of intellect and character; his strongly-knit frame, now in full health, with the quiet, pleasant smile which seemed ever at home about his firm and agreeable mouth: all were the points of a young man of the first stamp, morally and physically, while the steady courage of his glance, though kind when bent on his mother and sister, and upon those he loved, could flash with the lightnings of an overwhelming anger when wrong or injustice aroused its smouldering fires.

While they were at tea, Wallace suddenly said:

"We had something unpleasant occur at the office to-day! You know how many thousands of letters pass through our hands; and many of them contain money or valuable drafts. It seems that one merchant of this city has lost money several times sent to him, and to-day the postmaster had us all up, and desired each one of us to endeavour to detect the person; for, until then, the suspicion rested upon each. He said

he suspected no one, but he warned all that they would be closely watched. This, of course, was not very pleasant."

"But they could not suspect you, Wallace; you have been there so short a time," said his mother.

"No; and I trust not, if I had been there a longer time. There are certainly opportunities for embezzling money and substracting it from letters. One of our clerks, a Mr Spinker, was so indignant that he said we all ought to resign, as it was an insult. But I thought differently. These losses have been going on for more than a year, and though detectives have been on the alert, no one has yet been detected in the act of purloining. To-day, at least a dozen letters that passed through my hands contained money. I shall be rejoiced when the depredator is detected, as it will relieve us all from suspicion."

"I do hope he may be found out," said his mother. "Have you seen Mr Moncure lately?"

"No; I do not like to be going to his house, although he is so very kind, and his daughter receives me so pleasantly. His son I do not like. He treats me coldly; seems to dislike me for the favour his father has conferred on me. No; I must keep away—for I shall think too much of the beautiful Rachel if I see her often!"

The next morning Spinker was at his post at the delivery-window as usual. He had, as we have seen, sent his box of Isabella cigars, with the note to Guy Ravenel. In the interval of rest between the deliveries of the letters, he conned over in his mind the probable result of this costly peace-offering; for costly it was to one whose salary was but \$800, and

hose bill at the Carlton was upward of \$1,000, to y nothing of his tailor's and hatter's bills, and his very-stable expenses, and spending-money for the eatre, and upon his vices, which came up to the bund sum of \$2,000 a-year above his salary. This money must have come from some solid source; for it as solid gold and silver he expended so freely, and come, beyond his clerkship, he had none.

"You have dropped a letter, sir, from the parcel."

He looked up from the handful of letters which he eld, and from which he was searching for the name of a person at the window, and saw Wallace Wyndham, who, having picked up the letter as he was passing, returned it to him.

"You need not trouble yourself. I knew I had dropped it, and meant to pick it up when I got ready," was the sullen reply; for the letter had been dropped purposely, but not so skilfully as it was intended.

Wallace was passing on, when his attention was drawn to a large carnelian ring on his finger; and then seeing two seals, one like a fork, the other like a cross, dangling from his gold chain, he turned suddenly pale, and fixed such a look of inquiry upon his face, that he turned his head away.

From that moment Wallace kept turning the subject constantly in his mind, until he began to feel almost sure that he must have been the visitor; for he recalled the fact of meeting him on the street nearest to his mother's under the lamp. But he did not wish to speak without certainty. At length he watched his opportunity, and having prepared a letter addressed to "Jonas Smith," he handed it to him, saying quietly:

"Will you place this in your box-side, as you have from K to S, I believe."

He watched him as he read the inscription, and seeing the colour mount to his brow, and that he cast a quick, suspicious look at him, he said in a low tone

"I see it is for you, sir! I was right. You were at my house last night?"

"I—I? What had I to do at your house?" he answered, with stuttering embarrassment, and turning away his face as if he wished to hide the evidences of confusion he felt must be visible on his features.

"You doubtless called to see me; at least Mr Jonas Smith said that was his business."

"Who is Jonas Smith? I don't know what you mean."

"I will explain. Last night you called at my house but you had followed my sister home, which led you to go in. This I learn from the old negro, as well as from herself; for she distinctly recollected you passed her, and looked into her face; you pretended you wished to see me. You knew that I was engaged here, and that you would not be interrupted by my return. You told falsehoods, saying I had spoken to you of my sister, and that I had intended to introduce you to her. You called yourself by an assumed name. Nay, do not try and deny this. My mother described you so fully, and my sister named your jewellery so accurately, and as I met you on my street as I was going home, I have full conviction, sir, that it was you."

"Well, sir, and what if it was me? Is your house one of ill-fame, that a gentleman can't go into it without all this fuss?" demanded Spinker, with anger and fear commingled.

Wallace clenched his hand, and was hardly able to restrain the blow which would have felled him to the floor; but acting calmly and prudently (for they were in the public room of the office, though a little aside from observation behind the circular revolving boxes), said:

"You meant evil, or you would not have assumed a name nor spoken a falsehood. I know your character is that of a pitiable libertine. Now, sir, if I know you to approach my residence again; ay, if I know you to be seen walking on that street, as true as I am a living man, I will take your life, if less punishment will not do. You have my warning."

"I would rather you would give fewer lessons," Wallace said to his sister on returning home at night, and beat home at sundown or before; for it is dangerous for a woman to walk in this city after dark alone! My month's salary will soon be paid, and I shall be able to meet our little bills, and relieve mother and you of much toil; and by-and-by I hope to take the whole burden upon myself, so that you can give up your portfolio and mother her needle—at least, in a great measure."

"Do not talk so, Wallace," said his mother. "I am happier poor, with you at home, where I can see you every day, than were you away on the seas making gold by the sackful!"

"So am I, brother," said Magdalene; "yet, I confess, I sometimes wish you were rich, and that we might associate in the circles of the gay and aristocratic. I feel my grandmother's blood warm my veins at times, and I sigh to think how low we are fallen!"

"No more of this, dear sister," said Wallace. "Do you not see how sorrowful it makes mother look?"

"And I feel that I am the cause of this humble life I behold my children in," said Mrs Wyndham. "But one false step I have entailed upon you all your privations."

"Dear mother, do not reflect upon yourself," said Wallace. "We have known no other condition and cannot grieve for what we have not possessed?"

"You ought to have inherited wealth, and rank and title. My grandfather, Sir Charles Burdett disinherited his daughter, your grandmother, for eloping with Sir Andrew Pickens, of Stuart, Scotland. To the day of his death he refused to see her, and in his will disinherited her. My mother, Sir Charles' daughter, suffered here with her husband, who became so poor that he had to endure great privations. They removed to Philadelphia, where the next year she died of the yellow fever, and her husband in a week followed her. I grew up, adopted by a kind Quaker family, and I was so ungrateful as to elope with and marry a poor young Englishman, my cousin, Francis Wyndham Burdett, whose father, Sir Charles Burdett, had disinherited for favouring my mother's marriage with the Scotch baronet. This young man, without fortune, but possessing every virtue, was your father. He died seven years afterward, leaving me with but a few dollars that I could call my own."

"Then we are descended in two branches from Sir Charles Burdett?" asked Magdalene, whose imagination seemed awakened by this distinguished lineage.

"Yes. You are also the great grandchildren of the Earl of Wyndham, whose daughter was Lady Burdett,

wife of Sir Charles, and your grandmother. Sir Charles disinherited his son and daughter, the first being the grandfather of your father, the second my grandmother; thus your father and I were not only second cousins but equally the heirs of poverty and victims of ancestral disinheritance."

"Does the family still exist in England?" asked Magdalene.

"Yes! Twenty years ago, when you, Wallace, were but two years old, an advertisement, signed by Sir Francis Burdett, appeared in a New York paper, and also in the *Charleston Courier*, asking for the heirs of Mary Wyndham Burdett Pickens, who was the daughter of Sir Charles Burdett, and granddaughter of the Earl of Wyndham."

"This was our grandmother?" said Wallace, interrogating.

"Yes. The advertisement desired the heirs to report to some person in London. Your father was about to answer it, when he was taken ill and died; and as the sheriff took all our furniture to pay his debts, his papers were scattered and lost; and I was never able to recover the advertisement, nor find the paper it had appeared in!"

"This was twenty years ago, mother?" asked Wallace, now fairly interested in the revelation.

"Yes!"

"And has nothing been done about it?"

"Not anything. I was too poor to go to the expense of paying persons to hunt up the advertisement, or to send any one to England, so by-and-by I forgot it."

Wallace looked thoughtful. At length he said:

"Perhaps that advertisement could yet be found and something might result beneficial to you, dear mother. Do you recollect the New York paper?"

"No."

"Oh, brother, if it could be found, and it was not too late, and we should be able to get something from England."

"Do not be sanguine, sister. These English noble families are not easily persuaded to give up their estates to their American cousins. But as I know nothing of the wording of the advertisement, of course I can say nothing about it."

"At all events, we are of noble blood," said Magdalene, with beaming eyes and a proud air.

That night Wallace slept, dreaming that he had become a great prince, and enriched his mother, and made her happy; but while he was endeavouring to save his sister, who seemed to be struggling in a river, he was awakened by a loud voice in his room; and as he sprang up a dark-lantern blinded his eyes, and two police-officers seizing him, cried:

"You are our prisoner. Dress yourself, and come along with us."

CHAPTER IV.

THE reader, in order to comprehend the cause of the sudden arrest of Wallace, must go back with us to the post office. The rage of Spinker was enkindled against the brother of the beautiful Magdalene, not only on account of his discovery of his visit, but for the warning he gave him never more to be seen near the house where he resided. He had also been annoyed

that he should have picked up the letter from the floor; for, as we have intimated, he had let it drop thereon purposely.

The letter was addressed in the well-known handwriting of a cashier in Baltimore to a broker in this city. Former experiences had revealed to him that this superscription always covered good money. Of late, his expenses had been heavy at play. It became, therefore, necessary that he should be presently "in funds" again; and he resolved, when he went to the office, to avail himself of the first opportunity which should offer to replenish his finances.

Moreover, the sharp and vigilant watch which of late had been instituted in the post office, had kept him from supplying himself as usual, and thus his cash account "debit the post office money letters," had run alarmingly low. He knew that suspicion had fastened upon himself by a friendly word which the postmaster had dropped, a few days before, significantly.

The necessity, a few days afterward, of having funds, led him to watch for a safe opportunity; and the Baltimore letter was the temptation to which he yielded. Placing it underneath the pile of letters which he held in his hand, he let it artfully fall between his knees to the floor, and was in the act of covering it with his foot when Wallace spoke to him. He wore while in the office cloth slippers of remarkable width, in order to cover well any letter that he purposely dropped, a sticky gum being put under the sole to which it would adhere while he walked away to a secret place, where he could remove it unobserved. It was in this manner he had purloined the letters, out which, for months past, he had paid his

fashionable expenses. When his fellow-clerks would ridicule the enormous size of his slippers, he would laughingly reply that he had dreadful corns, and wore them to ease them; and so this singularity passed without awakening suspicion of his real motive.

That Wallace Wyndham, "the new clerk," should be so on the alert as to point out so readily the fallen letter, discomposed and angered him, while it created a dislike to him on the spot. The predecessor of Wallace at the other window had been a dull, near-sighted young man, who saw nothing a yard beyond his thin retroussé nose; and under the cover of his blindness Spinker had made hay. He saw now that he had a neighbour who was sharp-eyed, while his face showed he was thoroughly honest.

At about one o'clock it was the custom of the clerks to go one by one to a restaurant at hand to take a lunch, which some of them made their dinner. Wallace was one of the latter; while Spinker only drank a "brandy and water," or ate a few oysters, reserving himself for a sumptuous five o'clock dinner at the Carlton.

When Wallace went out for his ten minutes' lunch, Spinker again took the letter which he had replaced in the box, twice withholding it from the owner and his clerk, who had called at his window for their letters, and adroitly placed it, with two others, in the coat he wore out of doors. He then glided out at a back-way, until he came to a narrow alley, along which he walked rapidly, and disappeared in the third door.

"Aunt Maggie, quick! Have you hot water on?"

"Never is without it, Mr Spinker, you know."

"Let me go into the back room. Shut the door, and don't let any one in till I get through."

"Plank your dollar down, Mister Spinker. You know I never trus', not even for hot water, if there ain't no coffee in it. Some o' the old letters, I guess."

Spinker gave her a silver dollar, and said:

"Hush! Don't breathe a word! Walls have ears!"

"Well, mine hain't got tongues to tell what they hear, if they has got ears to hear. I thought they'd got so sharp-like up there in the office you couldn't handle a letter long enough scarce to read the ritin' on it. Hope times is better, and glad to see you here again. He ought to give me more nor a dollar, for I knows he gets hun'reds!"

Spinker, upon reaching the little dark apartment in the rear, where stood a stove, carefully closed the glass door, curtained the half-windows, already dusky with cobwebs, and then taking the Baltimore letter from his pocket, he poured hot water upon the wafer until it became so soft, that, with a thin blade, he skilfully separated it, and opened the letter. It contained a check on the New York Bank for eight hundred dollars, and two one hundred dollar bank-notes.

"This is a very nice haul," said Mr Spinker, cautiously glancing round, to see if he was overlooked by any eye. "This money I will keep as my share. There is no danger in cash. But I will see what I can do with the check. There are two more letters that look like full pigeons."

He opened these in the same manner, and very adroitly, as if familiar with the work. One of them

contained a five-hundred dollar bank-bill; and the other only fifty-five dollars in money. Having removed the contents of the two "heavy" letters, he carefully resealed them, and then held them to the stove until they were perfectly dry. When no trace of the deed done upon them remained, he replaced them in his pocket, and going out, said:

"Well, Mag, you are a good dame, always to keep hot water handy. You earn a dollar cheaply for a few drops of it."

"A dollar is not enough, Mr Spinker," she said, in a surly tone. "You mustn't try to cheat me. I know what you are at, and have been at a long while; but so long as you pay me I'm dumb and mum. But you mustn't try and cheat me." This was said in a menacing tone. "There were three letters you opened, and took the money out of. I seed you through the hole I have in the partition. I'm too old a bird to be cocht with chaff. Hand me five dollars."

"I don't mean to cheat you, aunty," he said, soothingly. "But five dollars is too much. It was a dollar a letter."

"Honour among thieves, Mr Spinker. You know I know enough to get yer into trouble, if I choose to be ugly. But I never betrays my customers. I'd ha' taken three dollars for the three letters, but you must pay for trying to cheat me. Honour bright."

Spinker paid the five dollars, the last money he had, save what he had just embezzled, and went out.

"Don't be ugly, Aunt Maggie. I will give you more money by-and-by. It will be for your interest to keep friends with me; for if you know my secret, I know yours, or I would not have trusted you as I have done."

"My secret; I'd like to know what secret you know about me?" and the woman's red face turned yellow and blue, and her usually cold, fixed blue eyes became unsteady.

"Oh, it is nothing, since it troubles you. But you recollect that your husband came very suddenly to his death. That's all. If you are ugly, why, I can be ugly too, you see."

He regained the post office after an absence of eight minutes, not more. Wallace had not returned. His brown linen jacket, which he usually wore, was hanging by his window. Watching his opportunity, Spinker skilfully secreted the three letters in the inside pocket, and hung it again upon the nail. Scarcely had he done so, when Wallace returned, and, resuming his jacket, proceeded, wholly unsuspecting, to assort and distribute the letters of a mail which had just been opened.

Spinker immediately left to go to his lunch, exulting in the act he had perpetrated. While he was sipping his brandy and water, he said within himself:

"There is no danger at all of his looking into his pocket. We use our office-jackets only to work in, and throw them aside. But I must risk the chance."

While he ate his oysters in a side recess, he deliberated how he should get the check cashed that day without suspicion. "As for the bank notes, I am ready to present them for small notes, 'as from the postmaster,'" he said. "These don't trouble me."

And they did not trouble him. He had no sooner finished his lunch than he hastened to the nearest bank, and coolly asked the paying-teller to give him small bills and silver for the notes. This was done for

all but the fifty dollars, which, being a new issue of a peculiar vignette, on a new bank, he had left in the letter which he had put in Wallace's jacket pocket, and with a deep and sinister motive, as will by-and-by appear.

But the check. How should he dispose of this! As he returned toward the office thinking upon this subject, an idea suddenly flashed upon his mind.

"I have it. The devil has helped me out. It would not do for me to present it in person. I will indorse it by the name of the person in whose favour it is drawn, and—"

Just at this moment a gentleman stopped him. It was the very man to whom the letter containing the one thousand dollars in two bank-notes and the check was addressed.

"By the way, Spinker, the mails are very irregular now-a-days. I ought to have had a letter containing a remittance from Baltimore to-day. But it is not come."

"Not come," answered Spinker, his self-possession being complete. "I am sure I saw a letter for you with the Baltimore post-mark."

"I have inquired for one, but was assured there was none there. Are you sure you saw such a letter?"

"I am certain of it. I am now going to the office. I will look again for you; and if it is there, will dispatch it at once to your counting-room."

"I will thank you to do so," answered the broker, moving on.

"Wyndham is now fairly committed to the letter," he said exultingly. "But I will see that the trap is well baited, so that there shall be no chance of his escape."

He now reached the post office, and going to a desk which was on the outside of the delivery-window, used by persons who wished to write in their letters any additional matter, he endorsed on the check the name of the gentleman he had just been speaking with, being perfectly familiar with his signature. He then quietly dried the ink upon the blotter, and going into the office, called to him a lad who was employed as an errand-boy: "Billy," he said to the freckled-faced youth of fourteen years, "come here."

"I'm here, Mister Spinker," said the boy, with forward impudence.

"Take this quarter."

"I'll take it, and be a thousand times obliged to you, sir."

"Don't be pert. I wish you to carry this to the bank and get it cashed."

"They never would give me the money, sir."

"Go to Mr Wyndham, and tell him the postmaster wishes him to take it to the bank. But stay, don't mention my name."

"Is that what the quarter is for? to keep your name secret?" asked the boy, knowingly.

"Yes; and if you do your errand just as I tell you, I will add three more quarters to it."

"I'm only to tell Mr Wyndham the postmaster says he must take it to the bank?"

"Yes, but you are to go with him to show him the bank, and see he gets the money, and return and give it to me. I shall be in at Dame Maggie's. Now be discreet. I know you are shrewd enough. Ask no questions, and keep silent after, and I will be your friend."

The lad winked, as if there was a perfect understanding between him and Mr Spinker, and off he went with the check to the window where Wyndham was at work.

"Mister Wyndham, the colonel says he wants you to go to the bank and get the money for this check, and I must go with you to bring the money to him."

Wallace looked at the paper, and seeing it was for \$800, had no doubt at all of the authority of the message. In a few minutes he reached the bank, and presented the check to the paying-teller.

This officer read the face of it, and then said, looking closely at Wallace:

"This is payable to order, and is indorsed by Allan Campbell. Are you that person?"

"My name is Wyndham, sir. I am a clerk in the post office. I was sent here by the postmaster to get it cashed."

"The postmaster then should have indorsed it, if it is transferred to him," said the teller.

"It was doubtless an oversight," answered Wallace. "I will take it back again to him for his indorsement."

There was such candour and manly frankness in Wyndham's countenance, that the close and observing gaze of the teller dismissed their momentary suspicion, and he said:

"Very well. When indorsed by Colonel — we will pay it."

Wyndham left the bank, and said to the boy, giving him the check:

"Run and ask the colonel to indorse it, and I will wait here."

The boy took the check and made his way as quickly as he could to find Spinker, to whom he handed it, saying bluntly: "Nary red."

"What do you mean?" he asked, eagerly.

"The bank man said the colonel's name must go on it, and so wouldn't fork over to Mr Wyndham; and he gave me the check to go and ask the colonel to endorse it."

"Good heavens! Did you go near him?"

"Haven't I cut my eye-teeth, I wonder? Don't you s'pose I know what is what, and when I ought to speak and oughtn't to! I knew you didn't care about mixin' up the old man in a matter he doesn't know nothin' 'bout. So I didn't take it to him, but brought it to you, as I got it from you."

"You are an honest, shrewd lad. You don't know what a scrape you had like to have got me in. Where is Wyndham?"

"Waitin' at the bank door."

"For you to come back?"

"Yes."

"Good. Stay here a moment and I will go to the colonel."

Spinker retired to another apartment, and in a few moments returned with the forged signature of the postmaster, which he had managed to imitate very closely.

"Now hasten to Mr Wyndham."

In ten minutes the lad returned with the \$300 in gold and paper, and handing it to the delighted Spinker, said:

"There is your money, Mister Spinker. You oughter give me two dollars!"

"There they are, boy? Did the teller pay the check at once?"

"Yes."

"To Mr Wyndham?"

"Yes; who else, I wonder?"

"And did he give it to you?"

"Not till I got to the post office door; and then he told me to run with it quickly to the colonel. If I hadn't told him I could carry it safe he'd have took it to him."

"You managed well. Now keep dark, and say nothing, and I'll give you a new suit of clothes for next Sunday."

The boy smiled archly, and left him; but as he went out into the street he jingled his two pieces of gold in his pocket with elation; for, with wit enough to understand that Spinker was at some dishonest work, he had abstracted two ten-dollar pieces, well aware, when he should come to count and miss them, he would not dare to "make a fuss" about them. He also saw that Wyndham, in some way, had been made the tool of Spinker's financial operations. His instincts gave him perfect knowledge of Spinker's character, and an appreciation of the higher and nobler nature of Wallace Wyndham.

CHAPTER V.

"WELL, this has been a lucky day for Spinker," said to himself this self-satisfied young gentleman, as he got into an omnibus, and, with his hand upon his well-filled pocket-book, seated himself for the ride up to the Carlton. "Fifteen hundred, cool! This will

elp me along amazingly for a couple of months, during which time I intend to be as virtuous as a saint. I shall be ignorant for eight weeks to come what letters ever contained money. Moreover, I think I have settled Mr Wallace Wyndham; and if I do not get my revenge upon him, and carry out my wishes in reference to the fair girl, his sister, then I am an ass, and you may write me down a fool, Spence Spinker!"

Scarcely had he finished this mental address when he looked up, and saw seated nearly opposite to him Mr Guy Ravenel. His eyes fell, and he coloured with mingled anger and mortification; for he had received this young aristocrat's letter, and it had cut him to the quick. The check for forty dollars, however, he had spirit enough to return to him in an envelope through the post office in "disdainful silence." He now felt ill at ease; but Ravenel paid no regard to him, but seemed to be wholly absorbed in watching the face of a lovely, dark-eyed Jewess who sat nearly opposite to him. This Jewess was Isabel Rachel Moncure. Even Spinker at length discovered her, and deigned to stare at her with that impudent stare of satisfied vanity and presumption which characterizes young men of his calibre.

The postmaster was seated in his private room about five o'clock, writing a letter, when his confidential clerk announced "Mr Allan Campbell."

"Glad to see you, Mr Campbell. I am sorry to say that all inquiries and researches have not brought your letter to light, lost two months ago. But I am instructed by the Department to say, that under the peculiar circumstances they will make up your loss of two thousand dollars."

"That is very gratifying to me, I assure you, sir, and I am grateful to the postmaster-general. But I did not call on this business, colonel, but to ask you to be so kind as to have search made among the letters for one which came to me to-day from Baltimore. It should have contained one thousand dollars, either in bank-notes or a check."

"Are you sure that the letter came?"

"It was to have been mailed to me here to-day, to pay a note in bank to-morrow; and, besides, though one of the clerks said there was no such letter, yet another, Mr Spinker, told me he saw such a letter for me taken out of the mail."

"Tut, tut! I hope no more trouble. I will see at once!" And the colonel rang a little bell. "What clerk said it was not among the letters?"

"I do not know."

"I will find out. The clerk on your side is now at his post. Here he is. Mr Wyndham."

"Who delivered the letters from A to I to-day, in the absence of Mr Brownley, who is ill?"

"Some were delivered by me, sir; some by Mr Spinker."

"Were you asked for a letter for Mr Allan Campbell?"

"Yes, sir; twice, I think, that name was called for."

"Were there any letters?"

"No, sir; that is, I delivered none. Mr Spinker may have done so."

"Where is Mr Spinker?"

"Gone, sir!"

"He says there was such a letter. Will you go and re-examine the letters carefully, both those that are in

the boxes near Mr Campbell's and those in letter C, under the head of the 'General Delivery'?"

"A new clerk!" said Mr Campbell.

"Yes; and one, I think, from his face, is likely to prove reliable and honest."

"So I should think," answered the broker. "He has a clear, open eye, and a genial, pleasing voice."

"I trust the letter will be found," said the postmaster. "I do not think, if we do not find it, that it was mailed."

"Mr Spinker said he saw it!"

"Ah, indeed! Then it must be found. I hope we are to have no more difficulties. We have kept the sharpest watch, and I have dismissed the only two clerks who might have taken what letters have hitherto been missing."

In a few minutes Wallace returned.

"I find no such letter, sir," he said. "I have looked carefully."

The two gentlemen exchanged glances of perplexity.

"Well, Mr Campbell, if your letter does not appear to-morrow I will know why. But, till then, it is best not to make any noise about it. The quieter the safer. Believe me, I will do all I can."

"I am sure of that, colonel. If Mr Spinker had not positively assured me that he saw the letter taken out of the mail bag, I should have questioned its having been mailed."

"I will address a note at once to Mr Spinker to repair hither. Call early in the morning, Mr Campbell."

This gentleman had scarcely taken his departure when the door opened, and a stout, dark complexioned

gentleman, with small, piercing black eyes, ruddy cheeks, and full lips, with altogether a handsome face, was ushered in by the door-keeper. He was dressed in a suit of black, with a narrow red kerchief about his fleshy neck, and wore a broad-brim white hat. A massive watch chain crossed his portly stomach.

"Good even, colonel," he said, with a fine toned voice.

"Ah! Mr Moncure. Glad to see you. Take a chair, sir. How are stocks on Wall Street? Getting richer every hour, just sitting still and twirling your watch-key. Happy man. Lucky not to get your living by being a postmaster, Moncure. It is a place to try men's souls, and try them out till nothing is left. Trouble, trouble, and vexation of spirit. Here's more mystery to keep one in hot water. Another letter not come to hand. I almost begin to think my friends will suspect me of feathering my nest, since none of my clerks are proven guilty."

"Honest clerks prove an honest master," answered the wealthy Jew, with suavity. "Like master, like man. Every office has its care. I am sorry, my friend, to have to increase your troubles."

"What now? Have you lost any letters?"

"Here is a letter addressed to me from Boston, advising that the same day they mailed me a letter containing \$500. It ought to have come to hand with this. I called, merely to ask your clerk if it is not overlooked."

"I trust that it will appear. I will go myself and examine the boxes. Two letters missing. This is strange and alarming. Mr Campbell has not received a money letter which ought to have come to hand to-day."

"Do not be disturbed, colonel. It will no doubt be all right. How does my young protégé, Mr Wyndham?"

"He does well. I think he will make a very capable person. But, excuse me, I wish to go into the delivery office."

In about ten minutes he returned, saying, with an air of disappointment:

"I can discover nothing of either of the letters; Mr Wyndham and I have made thorough search. If they are lost, and in this office, it will quite break my heart. I am an honest man, Mr Moncure, and—"

"We all know it, colonel. Haven't I known you for thirty years? Poh! poh! don't talk of your being an honest man. All New York knows that! But there must be some sifting of your clerks."

"That there shall be! And this night there shall be a thorough search made of the whole office by a police force; for I won't trust one of my clerks. But this must not be known till they are all gone."

"Well, I hope my young friend Wyndham will prove himself pure gold."

"I don't suspect him. There is but one man I suspect capable of taking money out of letters. He is one of my most expert and experienced clerks. If the worst comes to the worst, I must have him arrested."

"Is it Mr Spinker?" asked Mr Moncure, with a shrewd glance.

"Why do you name him?"

"Because I am a physiognomist, and like not well his face; and, moreover, I have seen him go in and out of Levi Jacobs' pawnbroker's shop, when I have been there gathering my rents of Levi. And when a

young man makes acquaintance with a pawnbroker's stall, he is in a bad way. The old song says:

“ ‘When Virtue falls,
Lo! the Three Balls!’ ”

“I am glad you told me this. I will have my eyes on Spinker more closely.”

The shades of night fell over the city when three policemen were admitted into the rear of the post office; and received into the room of the head of the office. Scarcely had they been admitted ere Spinker, who had received the message from the colonel while promenading Broadway, came in. He had some idea that the note of the colonel had reference to the purloined letters, and supposing they had been found in the jacket after Wyndham left, he felt full of confidence, and did not hesitate to appear at the office; for so artfully had he laid his train, that he had no fear of the explosion burning his own fingers. He supposed the colonel wished to consult with him about the discovery of the three letters.

When, therefore, he found the three policemen in the room, his heart sank within him. But he instantly recovered himself by saying:

“These are for Wyndham, not for me. I have nothing to fear.”

“Mr Spinker, did you see a letter in the mail to-day addressed to Mr Campbell?” asked the colonel.

“Yes, sir.”

“Did you see it in the box?”

“No, sir. I saw it on opening the mail. It was not in my parcels, but in those of the clerk next to me. I gave them to him to distribute.”

“Which clerk?”

"The new man lately come—Wyndham, I think, his name is."

This was spoken with well-assumed indifference.

"Was it his duty to put it into the boxes?"

"Yes, sir; Brown being sick, we two took charge of his window as well as we could. In the ordinary work, Mr Campbell's letter should have been put into the box by me; but in the way we divided, Wyndham had it in his parcel."

"You certainly saw it?"

"I did, sir! I told Mr Campbell so."

"Very well. Did you see anything of a letter addressed to Mr Moncure?"

Spinker turned pale, but rubbing his chin and the sides of his face with his forefinger and thumb, as if thinking and recalling, said:

"Ah—h—no—sir! I don't think I did. No, I am sure I did not."

This reply was artful. To know all about the letters (which he supposed had been found) might be an overshot of the mark, and implicate him, perhaps, as in collusion with Wyndham in their abstraction. It was enough for his purpose to have one letter traced to the new clerk.

"Then perhaps this Wyndham may know something about it, as he is likely to know of the first. Come, Mr Spinker, go with us, and help us search. You are likely to know the places a letter might by accident fall aside into, or by design be hidden away in."

This speech seemed so pointed, that he started. But he had a great command over himself. He also learned by it that the search was yet to begin, and that Wyndham was only suspected.

The whole party entered the delivery-rooms of the office, consisting not only of the policemen (three cunning detectives), and of the postmaster and Spinker, but of three or four of his friends, whom he invited.

"If we find a torn envelope, or even a shred of the letters, I shall of course know it is done in my office," he said, as he went along, being very sorely troubled in his mind.

Innumerable lights were now ignited, and a systematic search was commenced, each person taking a part of the office assigned him. Perhaps, on account of the vast aggregation of wrappers, and torn papers, and thrown-aside bits of paper, the interior of the post office is one of the most difficult places in which to institute a search for a torn paper. The task seemed to mock the searchers in the outset. The first step was carefully to sweep the floor, and collect every stray bit of paper in a pile in the centre. A police-officer then examined each piece, one by one.

The colonel himself inspected the letter boxes, aided by Spinker; for it was possible the letters might have been mis-distributed—got into the wrong pigeon-holes. After two hours' close inspection and ten o'clock had struck, Spinker, getting tired of his part in the (to him) force of search, and satisfied he had gone far enough to turn suspicion aside from himself, suggested to one of the police-officers to examine the office-jackets of the absent clerks.

"There is no knowing," he said, "where it may be. And as I am a clerk in the office, I wish to clear myself. You may begin with my jacket."

As he spoke he threw it to him.

The officer, smiling, took it, and searched the pocket, but found in it nothing but Ravenel's note, which he commenced reading aloud.

"That's not a letter," said Spinker, colouring. "Give it to me. I did not know it was there."

"Let me see it, Mr Officer," quickly called out the colonel, whose suspicions of Spinker had not yet vanished; and the way he asked for it led him to resolve he would see it. "It might be something he ought to see," he thought.

"I assure you, colonel, it is nothing. Only an impertinent note to me from a gentleman."

"I did not know a gentleman could write an impertinent note," answered the postmaster; and, opening the missive, he read a portion of it, and seeing it was signed "Guy Ravenel," he returned it, saying:

"You must excuse me, sir. We must search and read everything. I was not aware, however, you had become, as the note implies, a dealer in cigars."

"I am not, sir. It is an insult."

"That is your affair. Search, officers, all the jackets. One does not know what discoveries more important than this they may reveal."

The policemen had already been some minutes engaged in the work. Vexed and angry, Spinker ceased to search further; and seeing that the officers would not render it necessary for him to discover the letters in Wyndham's jacket, he let things take their natural course; but watching closely, while pretending to be wholly absorbed in tearing up into very small pieces Ravenel's note.

Wallace's jacket was the very last one on the rack.

They had not yet come to it, when the colonel, impatient at their slow search of pockets, which revealed nothing but pencils, tooth-picks, bits of cigars and peppermint lozenges, and such mysteries, he took down Wyndham's ink-stained jacket and shook it. Nothing fell from it, but he thought he heard the dry rattle of paper. He examined the outside pockets. In one was a white kerchief, marked W. W., from N. W., a gift from his sister. In the others was simply a memorandum, on which was written:

"Earl of Wyndham, great-great-grandfather.

Sir Charles Burdett, great-grandfather.

Mary Wyndham Burdett, his daughter-grandmother.

Charleston Courier.

To be investigated for dear mother's sake."

"What does all this mean?" muttered the colonel. "Earls and baronets! Well, it's nothing to me. It isn't the missing letters!" And he threw the jacket down, adding, "I knew I should find nothing in his jacket!"

"I heard a hard substance fall, sir," said Spinker, who saw, that unless he spoke, all would be lost in reference to his recent conspiracy, and at the risk of being suspected of knowing more than he ought about what was in the jacket, he spoke. "It sounded like a knife or key; and there must be another pocket; perhaps an inside one."

The colonel was about to take it up again, when one of the officers raised it, and in a moment revealed an inside pocket, out of which came, in his grasp, a knife, key, and three letters!

"Here are some things, sir, that look suspicious," he said to the postmaster, who, in a second, had the letters in his hands.

"With the rapidity of lightning, he read aloud in procession from each superscription:

"Mordecai M. Moncure.

"Allan Campbell.

"Colonel —, Postmaster, New York."

"This settles the matter, gentlemen! The letters are found, and one more! Now, heaven be thanked! Yet, I am ready to sink with shame that they are found in the pockets of one of the clerks in my office!"

"Who is he? What is his name?"

This question was eagerly put by the chief police officer; for now, as when game hounds have run their chase to cover, they were all roused and awake with excitement for the capture.

"I am sorry to say it is Wallace Wyndham, a poor young man whom I took on the recommendation of an old friend. The last man, from his face, I would have suspected, and yet, here are the damning proofs of his guilt. Now, I pray that the money may be still in them—that he only concealed them until a time to open them secretly; for they have not been opened, you perceive, gentlemen."

The first letter was the one addressed to himself, containing a remittance of fifty-five dollars. Upon finding it safe, he cried with pleasure:

"This money is untouched. It is a debt a person owed me. So the letters have not really been broken, which is something."

"You had best open the others," said one of the gentlemen, "to see if the money is safe."

"No, my friends. I will in the morning send for Mr Moncure and Mr Allan Campbell, and let them open them in my presence, when I doubt not

they will find the contents untouched as mine are. And now, sir," he said, addressing the chief policeman, "it becomes my painful duty to direct you to spare no time in arresting this unhappy young man. Fortunately, we have prevented the full consummation of his criminal intentions; yet there is no doubt that he meditated the embezzlement of the money if we had given him time. And now, proceed at once to the residence of this young man."

"Can you tell me where Wyndham resides?"

"That I cannot. Mr Spinker, do you know?"

"I think, sir, it is on — street, west side of Broadway, not far west of Mercer, left hand. There is a negro stall by the alley way."

"I know the place," answered one of the policemen.

After the officers had gone on their mission, Spinker lingered, wishing to be sure that no shadow of suspicion fell upon him.

"A painful affair, Mr Spinker! You have done us good service. Of course, in the trial, you will be summoned as a witness."

"The fact that the letters were found in his jacket will be sufficient evidence for his commitment, sir."

"True, for his commitment. I am sorry for him. I took quite a liking to him. How easily we are deceived!"

"Do you suspect any accomplices?"

"No—he needed none, so far. Why do you ask? Do you suspect any one?" And the colonel bent his gaze fixedly upon him.

"Oh, no, sir, not in the least. Good night, sir, if you do not desire my services any longer."

"Good night, Mr Spinker."

When, the next morning at nine o'clock, Mr Moncure and Mr Allan Campbell opened their recovered letters in the presence of the postmaster, each expecting to find the contents untouched, what pen can portray the surprise of all three! the consternation of the worthy colonel! Claspings his hands in despair, he sunk upon his chair, saying:

"There can be no mercy for him! I did feel for him; but now I will, without pity, let the law go its full length in punishing such a crime."

CHAPTER VI.

THE discovery that the letters which had contained the draft and money, addressed to Mr Moncure and Mr Campbell, had been robbed and artfully resealed, left no room for any emotion of clemency in the bosoms of these gentlemen, or in that of the postmaster. The latter, aggrieved that he should have been betrayed by his new clerk, "whose honest face," as he expressed, had won his heart; and the former, mortified and angry that this clerk should have been recommended by himself, and then robbed him, his benefactor, felt that he had placed himself beyond the pale of pity or mercy. The magistrate, on the representation of the facts, thus aggravated, refused bail, and committed Wyndham to prison to await his trial at the next session of the Federal Court; for it was an offence committed against the United States.

When Mr Spinker, as he sat the same evening of the committal of Wallace to the Tombs in the reading-room of the Carlton, eagerly looking over the evening papers, read the following paragraph, he felt a secret

and wicked joy, which gave to his small eyes unwonted brightness, and lent to his thin puckered mouth a sinister and self-gratulatory smile:—

“TREACHERY OF A POST OFFICE CLERK.—We learn that a clerk in the post office, by the name of Wyndham, has been detected in opening two letters, and embezzling the amounts, altogether fifteen hundred dollars. We are glad that at last there is found some one who is guilty of the late post office robberies. It is a comfort to know somebody took the money. But as this robber is a but clerk of two or three weeks' standing, he cannot bear the series of former thefts; yet it is a consolation we have found a tangible person; for it proves that robberies do take place in our immaculate office, and perhaps this fact may lead to the discovery of the former offenders. The delinquent is committed to the Tombs, as the proofs against him were overwhelming. Not only were the letters found in his coat-pocket, but the paying-teller of the bank testified to having paid him eight hundred dollars on the missing check; and what is more, the name on the check was forged. Thus the young gentleman is likely to come to a rope's end. An example is needed, and we trust that no executive clemency (weakness) will stand between this caught offender and the demands of justice.”

“That is the way to talk!” ejaculated Spinker, when he had finished the paragraph. “I am as safe and unsuspected as the angel Gabriel. Wyndham is in for it. The coast is now clear for me in the post office and at his house. Haven't I laid my traps skillfully? Wouldn't I have made an admirable detective-police chief? I have outwitted them all. So much for genius. I consider myself quite a Napoleon in my way. Admirable! Was anything ever better planned?”

So Spinker, confident in the vale of secrecy that enveloped him, and having paid his duns and his landlord, and certain sums of borrowed money, and

feeling himself "square again with the world," lighted a fresh cigar and went lounging up Broadway. As fortune would have it, he had not proceeded many steps ere the landau of Guy Ravenel rolled past, and the wheel dashed a few clots of mud, accidentally, in avoiding another vehicle, upon his faultless attire.

"That was done intentionally," he growled. "I will not be insulted by this proud Ravenel! He shall give me satisfaction. I know he is a poltroon; such fellows are cowards, and won't fight. I will no sooner get home than I will write him a challenge. I shall be quite a lion! Fellows will point to me and say, 'That is the gentleman that sent the challenge to Guy Ravenel.' I'm sure he won't fight."

While thus soliloquizing and brushing off the mud, a graceful girl glided past swiftly and closely veiled; but the air, the figure, the small, firmly-placed foot, the nameless contour of beauty which encircled her, arrested his attention. Spinker was one of those men who are always ready to recognise female beauty, and are singularly susceptible to the attractions of the most striking persons of the sex. It is of no matter of consequence to these gentlemen how many strings they have to their bow. Like the butterfly, every fresh flower tempts them still, and they sip dew from every bud. Quite forgetting that he was on his way to see Mrs Wyndham and her daughter and condole with them, he at once resolved to ascertain if the face crowning so charming a figure was beautiful.

The fair stranger walked rapidly, turning neither to the right nor the left; and at length turned aside from Broadway into the street where Mrs Wyndham lived. For a moment, the beauty of the sunset, with the

gleaming waters of the Hudson, seemed to draw the attention of the young lady; for she lifted her veil, and seemed to shorten her steps, as if to gaze upon it. It was at this moment that Spinker rushed by her and peered into her face. She dropped her veil, but not before he had been almost annihilated by the indignant and rebuking fire of a pair of splendid dark eyes, that flashed upon him from beneath dark, arched brows; while her curved, coral lips expressed contempt for the rude observer.

"*Par Dieu!*" ejaculated Spinker, who affected French oaths; "that was a face worthy of Dian. It is the same brunette beauty I saw in the omnibus. She must be a Jewess; for only the daughters of Abraham have such burning orbs for eyes. But I will know who she is. I will follow and see where she goes. I've nothing else to do. I wonder how Wyndham feels just now in his cell? Well, I shall have things now pretty much my own way."

"What! she has stopped at the very house where Wyndham's mother lives," he suddenly exclaimed. "She has gone in. Who can she be? I shall now be able to kill two birds with the one stone; for I will also go in. How fortunate that she has entered the very place I resolved to go to."

Without question, only the most consummate impudence and hardihood would have suggested to Spinker the idea of going to visit Wyndham's mother and sister the very next evening after his arrest. The least reflection ought to have showed him that his visit as "Jonas Smith" must have been declared to them by Wallace, on hearing of it, to be unauthorised, and a mystery that required clearing up. But Spinker

was not gifted with prudence. He was familiar with subterfuges and ways of getting out of difficulties, into which his passions and his vices, and his follies also, had involved him.

The young girl he had followed entered the little gate which led into the narrow between-alley on which the door of the widow's house opened. The twilight was gathering, and the alley looked gloomy. The old grey haired African was seated in his door of the basement, smoking a pipe with an inch of stem, which he kept cooling every five minutes.

"Wha' ye lookin' for, missus?" he said civilly, making a pull at his grizzly forelock, which was as white and matted as sheep's wool.

"Does a Mrs Wyndham live here?" she asked, in a low and hesitating voice.

"Dis am de place, Miss. Jiss go down dese tree steps—take care; dey is slippery, coz it showered dis aternoon a bit—an' knock at de first door."

"Thank you."

"De ol' missus seed trouble. I hope you be gwine to comfort her; for sertain she needs it. Guess you know all 'bout it. Dis ol' nigger nebber so took in by any white folk's face. I'd 'a lended Mars'r Wallace ten dollars widout his security ob note ob hand, an' axed no body to endorse him. He was such a nice, kind-spoken young gentleman. I'se mity sorry. When de ossifers comed here last night, and axed for de door, I nebber sposed dey was after Mars'r Wallace. But dey took him off; and sick cryin' and 'stress ob min' as de ladies was in. I nebber 'spec sich a ting as robbin' de pos' ossiff by Mars'r Wallace. But I'm sertain he's innocent."

"I am glad you are a friend of Wallace's," said the veiled lady. "Do not believe he is guilty. He cannot be! What is your name?"

"Peter, Missus. Cicero Peter, at your service."

"Take that, Peter." And she placed in his hand a silver dollar.

"Bress your heart, Missus! I sure Mars'r Wallace nebber stole de money; dat is, I hope so. Ef he did, whar did he put it? He nebber spend notin? He dress plain: he nebber ride out and dash 'bout; he nebber stay out nights; always wid his mother and sister."

Spinker at this moment coming near the stranger, hurried down the alley, and knocking at the door, awaited to be admitted. Spinker followed her closely and said:

"Pardon me, Miss; I see we are both calling on the same person; for I suppose you came to see Mrs Wyndham."

The stranger made no reply. There was a tone in the voice of him who addressed her that she liked not and his face was strange, save that she had seen him in the street. So she turned her back upon him, as tried to open the door, as no one came to it, yielded, and closing the door upon him, she began to ascend the stairs as if she had had some previous information and was acting from it.

The door above was ajar. In it she met Magdalen who, with a face of alarm and wet with tears, encountered her with a look of surprise and interruption.

"Pardon me," said the intruder. I suppose I speak to Miss Wyndham," and she removed her veil.

"Yes," answered Magdalene, regarding with wonder and curiosity the superb face.

"I am Miss Moncure, Isabel Moncure," she said.

"Oh, Miss Moncure!" cried Magdalene.

"Oh, yes," repeated the widow, who had lifted her face, "it is Wallace's friend."

And she immediately rose and advanced toward her. Miss Moncure extended her hand to each, and said with sympathy:

"I have heard of your sorrows, and I have taken the liberty to come and see you, and to try and comfort you in this dark hour of trial."

"It is, indeed a dark hour," said the widow, bursting into tears. "Alas, my son, my noble Wallace! He never did wrong in his life; he cannot be guilty. The last words he said, as they took him off, were full of truth and comfort: 'Mother, I am innocent, and God will prove me to be so.'"

"Did he say this?" said Miss Moncure. "Let us not despair. I do not believe him guilty, and I will not rest until every means has been tried to prove his innocence. He may not have told you; but I now tell you that I love him. You are surprised? You do not know all, then. Perhaps his diffidence led him to conceal what he feels and must know I feel. I will relate to you all that has passed between us in our few interviews, that you may see that I take almost as deep an interest in proving his innocence as you, his mother and sister, can do." She was about to proceed, when she was interrupted by the opening of the door, and Spinker stood bowing in the entrance.

"Pardon me, Mrs Wyndham," he said, with his hat in his hand, "I —"

"Mr Jonas Smith!" exclaimed Magdalene, with surprise.

"Mr Jonas Smith Spinker, madam," said the post office clerk, with a formal bow: "You must know that it was only a mere conceit of mine to puzzle my friend Wallace in calling myself Jonas Smith. I dare say he was quite mystified. I now call to say that I am a brother-clerk in the post office, and that I wish to express my condolence with you. A nice fellow Wyndham. Don't think he was ever caught before; strong temptation in the post office. Deuced sight of money passes through our hands. Wonder so few are tempted to yield. I assure you I am very sorry—very! But you must not be too sorry about it. He'll no doubt be pardoned if he is found guilty."

Perhaps Mr Spinker would have run on for several minutes longer in this glib way, if Mrs Wyndham had not stopped him by saying:

"Sir, will you be so kind as to inform me why you have called?"

"To sympathize with the mother of my friend—my unfortunate, and I may say, unlucky friend, Wyndham, and to offer my services. If, Miss, I can be of any sort of service to you—"

"We are in deep trouble, sir, and any sympathy is grateful," said the widow. Moreover, as Wallace, notwithstanding the caution he had given his sister, had neglected to inform her that he had verified in Spinker the mysterious Mr Jonas Smith, she had no idea of the true character of the man, and was willing to look upon his omission of his "surname" as a mere pleasantry to mystify "his friend Wallace."

"You knew my son, then?"

"Well, Madam—well, Miss." The last word was addressed to the beautiful but now pale and tearful Magdalene. "He was my best friend. We stood next to each other in the office. His delivery window was close to mine. We had great jokes together between times, and we always lunched together. I was never so surprised when I heard he was suspected. I would as quickly have believed it of myself. But I have no doubt it was a conspiracy."

"A conspiracy!" suddenly rung out the clear flute like voice of the veiled Jewess, who until now had stood silently, and with an air of annoyance and slightly of contempt, observing the gaily attired intruder, whom she seemed to see through and through with her dark, piercing eyes; "a conspiracy, sir?"

Spinker started as if electrified. He said to himself, "I have a deep one here to deal with, and not easily deceived or humbugged."

"Yes, Miss, as I presume from your youth and beauty you are a Miss—"

"Do not trouble yourself with compliments, sir. This is a house of mourning. What you have to say, if you are a friend of this unhappy family, you will please say to the point. You spoke of a conspiracy. Explain yourself."

"Indeed, Miss, you are so fast upon a person. But if you are a friend of the young man—"

"It matters not whether I am a friend or not. If you know of a conspiracy relating to this lady's son, now in prison on a charge of robbing letters in the post office, you will do a good act in explaining your words."

"True, true. As I said, it is likely there is a con-

spiracy. I am his friend. I am the friend of his sister and mother. I have called here to offer my services as soon as I found they were in trouble. I am ready to help them with my advice, and even, if need be, with my purse."

"They do not need. You have not explained about the conspiracy," said the young lady, so pertinaciously, that Spinker wished she were in the bottom of the Red Sea.

"True; oh, true. I have no doubt it is a conspiracy. Perhaps no such letters were ever in the office; and some enemy has plotted the whole affair."

"Do you know of any enemy he had?" asked the Jewess, looking him full in the face.

"I? Oh, no! I have no idea who it is. It is only a surmise; because, you know, he was so honest he couldn't actually be guilty, you know. If he is not guilty, of course he's innocent, and if he's innocent, why, then he's not guilty, and therefore there must be a conspiracy."

Here Spinker stopped full. He felt confused by the great eyes upon him, and that he was talking in a circle.

"Really, I fear it is getting late. If I can be of any service, let me know. I am at the Carlton, No. 112, Mr Spinker." And here he turned and said aside to Magdalene, "if you, Miss, or your mother are in want of any money, my purse is at your service—for my friend, your brother's sake, of course."

The young girl thanked him frankly, and felt that Mr Spinker must indeed be a true friend. He then took his leave, and descended the stairs, feeling a relief to get away from the observation of those

piercing black eyes of the Jewess, which seemed to read him through and through.

He had got within a square of Broadway, when two men passing him, one on each side, simultaneously seized him by the collar, as if by preconcert, and covering his mouth with a handkerchief, dragged him into a recess between two houses, and throwing him down, held him, while a boy, who was of their party, commenced rifling his pockets with a celerity which showed his perfect familiarity with the place where they were.

"Don't leave a stiver, Billy," said one of the men, in a hoarse voice.

"Be sure, lad, ye make a clane swape o' it," said the other, whose knee was upon the chest of the prostrate man.

"Leave that to me, gents," answered the voice of Billy, the apple woman's son. "I've got his pocket-book and his purse. I am now fishing for small change."

In a few moments the pockets were thoroughly rifled; and one of the men, knocking Spinker's head two or three times against the bricks, to make him insensible, so that he should not give the alarm, the three left him, ran up the street, and were soon mingling with the crowd in Broadway.

CHAPTER VII.

IN a handsomely-appointed parlour in the house of Mordecai Marks Moncure, the richest Jew of New York, there were three persons, all evidently in an unusually excited state. They were the Jew, his

daughter—remarkable for her oriental beauty—and young Marks Moncure, the son and broker, a fine-looking but vain young fellow, presuming much upon his personal appearance and his father's wealth, and affecting great contempt for Christians and Gentiles.

"This is a result I could never have foreseen!" said the Jewish merchant, walking to and fro rapidly along the room. "I would I had known this in the bud. I would soon have crushed it. And you, Isabel, to have concealed this—perhaps been a party to it. By the Temple of Solomon and all that was therein, if I believed you knew this before to-day, and hid it from me, I would immolate you as Jephtha did his daughter, to the offended faith of our fathers!"

"I would compel my brother to die in the Jewish faith," said Marks Moncure, twisting his mustache. "If he insists on dying a Christian, let my dagger drink his blood!"

"Brother, you would not lay a finger on little Israel," said his sister, whose eyes were red with weeping, and whose face betrayed the deepest trouble.

"I would not? Let us see whether I would not. If my mother does not prevail upon him to recant, he shall not die a Nazarene, if I can prevent it!"

"Silence, Marks," said his father. "Let us not forget ourselves. No hand must be laid upon the child. We must try and convince him of his error."

"He will not be moved, father," said Isabel. "I have talked with him, urged him, pled with him, but in vain. He is as firm as if he were a grown man with an iron will."

"Yes; this Christianity is a perverse madness," said Marks. "It is infamy to our family to have one

die a Christian! We shall be disgraced among our people, and scorned in the synagogue."

"It must be kept a secret, therefore. Let no one breathe it," said the Jew, with a dark frown, and wringing his hands as if greatly moved. "Go and see what is done by your mother. If she can do no good, I know not who can!"

"Send for the Rabbi and the elders, and compel the boy to recant," said Marks, savagely.

Isabel, who had been directed by her father to go and speak with her mother, left the room, and, crossing the hall, opened a door leading into a bed-chamber, which was partially darkened by heavy curtains. Upon a couch opposite the western corridor lay the pale form of a beautiful boy of six years. One faultless hand, white as wax, lay upon his bosom; the other rested in the hand of his mother, a noble-looking Jewish lady, whose fine face still presented traces of remarkable oriental loveliness. The expression was kind but troubled; while the face of the beautiful and dying boy wore a sort of firm aspect, yet mild.

"Israel, will you not confess the faith of your nation?" she said, touchingly. "You will not break my heart by refusing all my entreaties? Do you not love me?"

"I love you, dearest mother," said the sweet boy, casting on her a look of beaming love, "but I love Jesus more!"

"That name! Why will you speak it?"

"Because there is no other name given among men whereby we can be saved!" answered the boy, with a clear and wonderful voice.

The Hebrew mother bowed her head over the little

hand she held, and burst into a passion of tears as if heart-broken.

In order to explain this extraordinary scene, we will relate the incident which ultimately led to it. One Sunday morning, about six months before we now behold this little Jewish boy upon his dying couch, he had wandered from the house until he came to a part of the city a mile from home, when he found that he had lost his way. Passing a large edifice, he heard singing within, as if from the voices of children. Loving music passionately, the little Jewish boy timidly stole into the vestibule, and, the door being ajar, he looked in and saw a large room filled with children, all singing together, while several gentlemen and ladies were interspersed among them, seeming to have the care of them.

The song they sang was very spirited and pleasing. He soon caught some of the words of the hymn:

“ I have a Saviour in the promised land,
I have a Saviour in the promised land,
When he calls me,
I must go
To meet him in the promised land.

“ I have a crown in the promised land,
I have a crown in the promised land,
When Jesus calls me,
I must go
To wear it in the promised land.”

The simple and graceful air with the refrain was easy to catch, that he found himself singing the chorus of the last verse with them, when a lady, seeing him in the door, beckoned to him so kindly and

smilingly, that he could not resist, and blushing, he approached her.

"What a splendid boy!" she said to herself, as he came toward her as she stood near the door.

"What is your name?"

"Israel," he answered.

"Do you go to a Sunday-school?"

"We go to synagogue."

"O, yes, I see! Then you are a Jew?" she said, with surprise and pleasure. "My father is!"

"What is his name?"

"Mr Moncure."

"And wouldn't you like to come here every Sunday—I mean Sabbath?"

"Do they sing so prettily every time?" he asked, his fine eyes full of expression and interest.

"O, yes!"

"Then I will come!" he answered, "if I can find the way."

From that time, every Sunday morning found the little Israelite boy at the Sunday-school, where his teacher, who was no other than Miss Kate Ravenel, taught him the first elements of Christian faith; and so deeply interested did she become in her *protégé*, that she would give him books of Christian tales; and, indeed, became exceedingly attached to the beautiful Jew-child, and he to her.

The absence of Israel every Sunday morning at length attracted the attention of his parents. Israel seemed instinctively to comprehend that the new faith he was being taught would not be approved of by his mother; and he concealed from her the change that was taking place in his young heart.

At length, one Sunday morning, Isabel followed him at a little distance, to learn where he went. She at length saw him stop at the door of a magnificent church on Broadway, just as a beautiful young lady alighted from an elegant landau. To Isabel's surprise, she saw her brother run up to the lady, and not only take her hand, but kissed her with marked affection. But her surprise was increased when she saw them enter the church-vestibule hand in hand.

"Whose carriage is this?" she asked of the liveried footman.

"Mr Ravenel's, Miss!" he answered, politely.

"What lady alighted from it?"

"Miss Ravenel!"

"I thank you. Is this a Christian Church?"

"It is ——— Church, Miss."

Isabel was amazed and confounded. She at once entered the church to see what had become of her brother. She saw the vast throng of Christian children, and her brother in their midst, looking perfectly happy. Hesitating how to act, she stood irresolute on the threshold of the Sunday-school room, when the whole school joined in singing the jubilant hymn,

"The Sunday school army is gathering once more!"

And Israel's rich voice was heard by her, rising as clear as a bird's in full tide of song.

"They have made a Christian of my brother!" she gasped. "What can be done? I will send for him and the lady!"

Turning to a person who seemed to be a janitor, she said: "Go, please, and ask that black-eyed boy in a

purple-velvet jacket, with gold lace, to come to the door! Ask the lady by him also to come with him!" And the eyes of the young Jewess flashed with anger.

Miss Kate Ravenel, who received the message first, rose and went into the vestibule, followed by Israel, who no sooner saw his sister than he ran to her and cried:

"Oh, are you come too, Rachel, to hear and learn all about Jesus?"

"It is as I feared! Will you be so kind as to explain to me why you have taken my brother to this place?" asked Isabel Rachel, with a pale face and angry eyes, as she gazed, yet not without admiration, upon the handsome young lady before her.

"Are you his sister?" asked Kate Ravenel, struck with the beauty of the Jewess. "I am glad to see you. It is by accident your brother came here, and I have taken the deepest interest in teaching him. Be sure that no unfair means have been used. He lost his way several Sundays ago, and wandered into this place, and I at once took a deep interest in him."

"So deep that you have made him a Christian!"

"No! for he has not received baptism. He has only been taught. Do not be offended." This was said so amiably and deprecatingly, that Isabel Moncure, who was by nature one of the most generous persons, said:

"Pardon me, I have been hasty! But I hope not much harm is done. You know, Miss Ravenel," she continued, with lady-like grace, "that we are very tenacious of our faith!"

"We respect your consistency. Forgive me if I have done you wrong. No one could know your

brother without becoming attached to him. I assure you, and believe me, I should not have gone so far as to talk with him of baptism, without frankly calling and seeing his parents."

"I do believe you. They would never consent. They would be grieved and very angry to know what has been done already. I dare not speak to them of it. My brother would be punished. He has kept the secret from us all that he was being taught Christianity. But I followed him this morning; and I trust that the discovery is made so early that he will soon forget what you have taught him."

"Miss Moncure, let us be friends. We both love Israel—let him be a bond of friendship between us. It is only yesterday I learned that my little pupil was the son of the opulent Mr Moncure. I have heard of you. How did you know me? You called me by name."

"I inquired of your coachman. If you are willing to be friends with a Jewess let us be friends."

"Were not Ruth, Naomi, Rachel, Rebecca Jewesses, names of historic interest? I have no prejudices; on the contrary, I am happy to have this opportunity of knowing you. Now, my dear boy, good bye. You must not come here again, but don't forget me!"

"I will not forget you, nor Jesus," answered the little fellow with deep emotion.

When, in her own room, Isabel questioned her brother, she found not only that the Jewish child had become a Christian child, but that with the most eloquent words he endeavoured to persuade his sister to embrace the faith which he had taken to his little heart.

From that hour she carefully guarded the secret so dangerous to be divulged.

At length, one morning, the little fellow awaked in a high fever. When his mother came to his bedside, she was alarmed at the danger which menaced him. She had hot water brought, and commenced bathing his feet.

All at once, his eyes brilliant with fever, he said:

"Mother, you are bathing a disciple's feet!"

"What, my boy—what do you say?" she asked, not understanding what he meant.

"I mean to say, that you don't know you are bathing a little disciple's feet!"

"What is a little disciple, my child?" asked the mother, supposing he spoke from delirium, and attaching no signification to his words.

"Jesus' disciple, mother! I am Jesus' disciple!"

"Hush, my boy! Hush, dear! Don't talk so. The poor boy has delirium," she said, turning to Isabel, who came in and had heard the last words of her brother with alarm.

"He seems to be in a high fever, mother."

"No, mother, no! I love my Saviour! I am a child of Jesus!"

"What language is this? Even if of delirium, where could my child have learned it?" said the Jewish mother with alarm.

"Where I learned all about how He was born in a manger, and died on a cross, and is now in heaven, and will take me there. I'm going to Jesus, dear mother! I want to go to Him. He loves me. He told all little children to come to Him, and he would carry them, like lambs, in his bosom."

"Don't talk so, Israel! Here is the doctor. Keep silence, my boy. Ah! doctor, he raves. I fear the worst."

It was at this crisis that we introduce the father, daughter, and son in the parlour speaking upon the event. It had been told to the father only that morning that Israel resolved to die a Christian—"a little disciple," as he termed it in his simple speech.

Isabel returned to her father from the errand into the room, which we have seen her go when at the beginning of this chapter. She reported that he was still firm.

"I will then go in. I must threaten," said Mr Moncre. "This must be stopped at all sacrifice."

When he entered the little chamber the evening sky still lighted up the little convert's face; and as his father looked upon it, it seemed as the face of an angel. It softened him.

"Israel, my child, do you still persevere?" he said, tenderly. "Do not make your father and mother miserable."

"'He that loveth father and mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me,' said my Saviour. I love you, but I love Jesus too, and am going to Him. Father, kneel down and pray with me to God."

The old man obeyed, believing he was to pray as he had taught him, to the God of Abraham. The little Christian commenced with a firm voice, and rapt gaze upward, while his thin hands were clasped together:

"Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name—"

He could proceed no further. The old man sprang to his feet, spat upon the ground with derision and

rage, and tore his wrapping-gown from the collar to the skirt in momentary phrenzy.

"Stop, boy! That prayer was made by a dead Jew, who died as a malefactor two thousand years ago. If you say that prayer again, I will curse you, by the God of Abraham."

Great tear-drops came into the dying boy's eyes. His sister kneeled by his pillow, her face buried in her hands, in deep agitation. His mother was crying bitterly, while the stern father stood gazing upon his son with emotions of affection struggling with pity and anger. For a moment, not a word was spoken. Suddenly the stillness was broken by a sweet voice, as if from the supernal realms. It was the dying boy singing portions of a Christian hymn:—

"Jesus! Saviour of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the billows fiercely roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh! receive my soul at last.

Hide me, O God's blessed Son,
'Neath the shadow of Thy wing,
Other refuge have I none—
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

The Jewish father stood transfixed. He had no power to move. He remained immovable like a statue of stone until the hymn was ended when, rending his clothes, he, with a great heart-broken cry, rushed from the room, fearing he should bless or curse his child if he lingered another moment in such a

place. With a look of horror his wife followed him, leaving Isabel only with her brother. She raised her face and said to him, with accents of love:

"Oh! Israel, how wretched you have made your father's house!"

"Talk not to me, sister! Hark!" and he sang:

"I have a Father in the promised land,
My father calls me,
I must go,
To meet Him in the promised land."

"You will break my heart, brother!"

"Sister, I am fast dying! I die a disciple! But, oh, I am not baptized! But there is water in my silver cup. I will get up and kneel in my bed, and you pour it upon my head."

Without a word, as if obeying an unseen influence, the young Jewish maiden rose and took the little silver cup of water in her hand, and the dying child got to his knees.

"Israel, I know not what to do or what to say. I obey you, because it is your dying wish."

"Say, as you pour it: 'Israel, I baptize thee in the name of the Lord Jesus.'"

"Israel, I baptize thee in the name of the Lord Jesus," she repeated, and poured a few drops of the bright water upon his bowed head.

"Amen! Now come, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" and, sinking gently upon his back, his spirit departed.

"Oh! what have I done!" shrieked Isabel; and falling upon her dead brother, she became insensible.

In this condition they were found by the parents,

who came rushing in at her shriek; but the secret of the baptism was known only to her and the spirit of him who had gone over to the "promised land."

CHAPTER VIII.

SEVERAL weeks elapsed after the burial of the "little disciple," before the feelings of the Jewish father were sufficiently calmed to enable him to mingle again in the pursuits of business. The secret had been carefully guarded in the family, and Israel was not named by them from the day of his burial.

But Isabel cherished in her heart his dear memory, and secretly recalled all he had said to her. One day she was looking sadly over his little books, when she saw one which had the impression of a golden cross on the cover, surrounded by rays. With curiosity, and yet with hesitation, she opened it. It was a little catechism. She read it with the deepest interest, for it had been her little brother's companion; and she read, too, in order to learn by what fascination he had been made a Christian. The truths she found in that little book made a deep impression upon her; and she took up a testament with gilded clasps, on which was engraved: "To my little pupil, Israel, from Kate Ravenel, his teacher."

"How she loved him. How deeply his death affected her. She will like to know how Israel died. Shall I read this New Testament? I am told it is the Christian life of Jesus of Nazareth."

Thus soliloquizing, she turned over the leaves. Her eyes were arrested by the narrative of the crucifixion. She read to its close, with tears:

"I will read this book! It can do me no harm. I wish to know this mystery of Christianity sealed to us Jews. They say Jesus was a Jew. Why shall I derive harm from reading his life? This the wonderful book which has been carefully kept from us, and which Jewish children are forbidden to read! It must be beautiful to be a Christian, if it made dear Israel so lovely in his death!"

That night, locked in her own apartment, with the secrecy with which other young ladies read works of fiction forbidden by their parents, this interesting young Jewess devoured the wonderful pages of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

"I am almost persuaded to be a Christian!"

One afternoon she had been to a hall on Broadway, to visit a painting of "The Crowning of Solomon," by a celebrated Jewish artist, which Mr Moncure desired to purchase, but first desiring Isabel's opinion. It was on her return home, having been delayed by a visit to a rich friend of her father's till dark, that they were waylaid and attacked, and rescued by the gallant courage of Wallace Wyndham.

It is not unnatural for a young and imaginative and generous girl to feel an interest in a handsome young man who performs for her a service such as that it was Wallace's good fortune to extend to her and her father. When she said that he was apparently a gentleman, with a good face and a pleasant, sympathising voice, she felt a curiosity to know who he was.

As it became necessary for Wallace to be detained, to testify against the two highwaymen, and as his ship went without him, Mr Moncure generously interested himself, as we already know, to obtain a situation for

him, so that he need not be separated from his mother and sister.

Now, when Mr Moncure returned home, on the day he had opened his letter, which had been found in Wallace's jacket, in the presence of the postmaster, and perceived that the contents were purloined, he was unsparing, in the presence of his daughter and son, of his indignation. Yet it was not all anger. He was grieved to be betrayed by one in whom he had placed confidence, and to whom he was also under an obligation

"And to rob one of my letters! One of mine—who got him the place!" he said, pacing the room and manifesting strong feeling. "I love to think well of one who has done me a service; but now we owe our rescue, daughter, to a felon! I meant to favour him. I liked him well. I meant to advance him, if he proved a capable clerk; and, secondly, I intended to make his mother and sister more comfortable, for I have seen them. I went there and saw them before I gave this young man the clerkship. I wished to see for myself if his story was true. They supposed me a physician, seeking a patient about there; and I went to their door and made inquiries as if I were: and to make an excuse for remaining, I asked the daughter (truly a lovely maiden) for a glass of water. I saw they were very poor, but very genteel, well-bred, and the mother looking like one who had seen better days. But now, all is undone. The young fellow has deceived me. Two letters. Fifteen hundred dollars in all. He has proceeded like an old offender, and one of these letters mine. I can never forgive it. I will pursue him to the full length of the law."

"I never expected any thing else of your protégé,"

said young Marks Moncure, who stood in the window writing his initials with a diamond ring upon a pane of glass, when his father had paused for a moment in his tirade against Wyndham for his criminal ingratitude. "Because a person saves my head from being broken by a footpad, it is no reason he should be invited to dine with me; for he may be a street paver who knocks the robber down with a paving-stone. I see no reason why he should be put into a place of trust, to gratify my feeling of gratitude, when a twenty-dollar bill would have answered the purpose and the person much better; nor do I see any reason why a fair maiden, because a sailor rescues her from a rude fellow, should fall in love with him off-hand. No doubt this is a very pretty thing in a novel, but in fact it is nonsense."

"You are right, son. I was a fool to get him the place. But what is this you hint? Have you, Rachel, taken any foolish interest in him?"

"My brother speaks severely. I have felt grateful to him, and I have wished to show him some attention," she said, blushing; "and I have twice asked him to call, after he brought my letter to me."

"What letter?" demanded Marks, her brother, with flashing eyes. "Does he come to you with letters? I knew he had been here twice, for each time I met him I treated him cavalierly, when I found you were singing and playing to him some of your Jewish airs and songs; but I had supposed he had called on business with my father."

"What letters did he bring you?" demanded Mr Moncure. "I hope you have not corresponded with the felon in the Tombs?"

"No, sir. He had been in the post office but two or three days when he saw a letter in your box, after all the other letters had been taken out. It was a thin one, and probably escaped his hand when he delivered the letters. He at once, on leaving the office, brought it to me, for it was addressed to me. I thanked him, and invited him in (for could I forget he had saved me from violence, and had not my father favoured him, and why should I not treat him courteously?), and I played to him; and asked him to come as often as he could."

"I do not like this," said Mr Moncure, shaking his head. "I hope," he added, gravely, "that no foolish notes have passed between you—that you have not, in any way, compromised yourself."

"No, sir," answered Isabel, with dignity. "I have been influenced only by gratitude. My brother is unkind to be so severe."

"Severe. Take heed, fair sister, you do not, in any other direction, give cause for severity, and something more serious than has been now spoken by me."

"Isabel, what is it? Do you love any one? His innuendoes seemed to say that you are unworthily in love. Of course, it is not this felon? For he said in another direction: Confide in me. Am I not your best friend? Are you in love with any one unworthy of you, or of your house?"

"No, dear father."

"Let me, then, caution you not to let your heart go out toward any Christian youth."

As he spoke, he tenderly embraced his beautiful child, who, for a moment, lingered in his arms; and then, smiling upon him, she said:

"Now, dear father, that the *entente cordiale* is complete between us, may I ask you one question?"

"A dozen, my daughter. But what is the question?"

"Do you really believe Wallace Wyndham guilty?"

"What reason can you have to doubt his guilt?" asked Mr Moncure, with surprise. "Were not the letters found in his jacket? Was not the money taken out?"

"May not another person have put the letters, after robbing them, in his jacket?"

"Another person would have robbed all three then. But one of the letters still had the contents, fifty-five dollars, in it—which shows that he had not yet had time to appropriate it, but intended to do so."

"Another hand might not have had time to open it, and put it with the others."

"I am willing to give the wretched young man every advantage; and I praise you for not condemning him at once, since he has done us the service he did. But you forget that he is proved to have presented the check at the bank, and received the money. The facts are damning, Rachel. There is no hope for him."

The young girl covered her face with her hand; and the father, without looking again at her, went out to dinner.

"Alas! how hopeless it all appears," she said. "Can he be guilty? Must I believe in his criminality? He whom I knew only to esteem, to prove unworthy of my growing regard to him. I will not believe him guilty. I will hear from his own lips the facts. But his mother, of whom he spoke so tenderly, and that beautiful sister I have heard him talk of with such

pride and affection, even they believe him guilty. I will go and see them—I know where they live. I will talk with them; oh, how wretched they must be. I shall not be a perfect stranger to them; for he told me he had spoken to them of me. Perhaps then I shall learn something more definite. At least they will visit him in his prison, and I can go with them.”

Having come to this mind, she felt more composed, as the troubled do when resolution takes the place of indecision; and endeavouring to appear tranquil, she went to the dining-room. Her father and brother were already seated. She felt that she could not look the latter full in the face; for she was now confident he had guessed, if he did not certainly know, that she was a half convert to the faith of the despised Nazarene.

But little was said at table. Her father's thoughts were absent, and she was dispirited.

When, therefore, her father had gone to pay a visit to a friend, to talk over the affairs of young Wyndham, and her brother had gone to the club, she closely veiled herself, and went forth to seek the abode of Wallace's mother.

The result of the interview with the widow was, that the next morning they were to visit the Tombs together, Isabel wearing the dress and veil of Magdalene, in order not to run the chance of detection by her friends, while the sister was to remain at home.

The hour passed with the widow and daughter had convinced them that the young Jewess was not only the true friend of Wallace and of themselves, for his sake, but that she was at heart a believer in the Christian faith. When, therefore, Isabel took her leave, the three ladies were not only firm friends

(Wallace being the golden link that bound them together), but were each equally believing in the innocence of one who held to them the relations of son, brother, and lover.

CHAPTER IX.

WE now introduce the reader into a luxuriously furnished boudoir in a stately mansion in the vicinity of Fifth Avenue and Fourteenth Street. A young lady reclines upon an ottoman, pale, and looking indisposed. It is Kate Ravenel. The time is the evening of the day after which Wyndham had been thrown into prison. Near her sits her brother. They are a handsome pair, resembling each other strikingly, yet in disposition very opposite. She is amiable and sympathetic; he is impetuous and not a little selfish; yet he is by no means deficient in noble qualities both of the mind and heart. He had not married, because, as he said, he had never seen a woman as beautiful as his sister; and with this ideal there was little prospect of his soon surrendering the freedom of his bachelor state.

He had first read to her an account of a ball, and was running his eye down the column, skipping paragraphs which he thought she would not be interested in, when she sighed, and drew his instant regards to her:

"Pray, dearest Kate, forget that little Jew boy. You take it too much to heart," he said tenderly, yet with a slight reproach in his brotherly tone. "Really, it is almost a fanaticism. The truth is, I never thought it was exactly your place to be teaching in the Sunday

school because it was the fashion. This comes of it: You find a little Jew boy—handsome, I doubt not, as young Samuel—and must Christianize him. He dies a Christian, and you are breaking your heart.”

“Not because he died a Christian, brother,” answered Miss Ravenel, “but because his death was so like a martyrdom.”

“That is absurd. There are no modern martyrs.”

“Yet he died one. I only three days ago got a full narrative of the particulars of his death, which I did not hear of until some days after it took place. It is this that has made me so sad. Read that letter, Guy.”

He took the letter. It was written in a beautiful Italian hand by Rachel Moncure, and which the latter had written at the earnest request of Kate to learn all the particulars of her brother's death.

Ravenel read with deep attention, each moment becoming more and more absorbed. His sister watched the changing expression of his fine countenance, as now indignation, now pleasure, now sympathy, each in its turn, passed across it.

For a few moments there was an unbroken silence. He then said:

“It is beautiful. Such a deathbed adds another bright link to the chain of evidence to prove Christianity came from God. I would almost wish I had died at his age, if I could have died like him. I see now why you are sad. But you ought to feel happy.”

“I do; yet I cannot but be moved by it.”

“His sister writes as if she were half a Christian.”

“She is. I mean to see her. I will try and bring her to the same faith her brother has illustrated so beautifully.”

"I think you will next offer yourself as a missionary to the Jews, sister," said he, smilingly. "But you must not think about the departed boy. To-morrow we will take an excursion for a few days up the Hudson. You need change of air. Let me read to you a piece of poetry I find in the paper. It is by Longfellow."

When he had ended it, his eye fell on the following paragraph:—

"ARRESTED.—Last night, at his residence, a young man, clerk in the post office, named Wallace Wyndham, was arrested on the charge of purloining money from letters in the office. The proofs against him are so strong that he has been committed to the Tombs to-day, to await his trial. He has heretofore borne a good character, and has a widowed mother and a sister to suffer by his guilt."

"Wyndham! Wallace Wyndham!" repeated Ravenel, thoughtfully looking at his sister; "that is the name of my young yacht coxswain."

"Yes; that was the name of the young sailor you were so much pleased with."

"It must be the same. Yet I trust not. He would not be likely to be in the post office—a young fellow like him, with an eye and hand that were fitted to command on the free blue sea. Besides, he was too honest, too frank and generous, if I know anything of character, to commit this crime!"

"Isn't he the same who praised to you his sister?"

"Yes; and gave me a great curiosity to see her; for he said I resembled her."

"I remember when you told me about it, and how amused you were; and I recollect you said that you would like to see a young lady who resembled you!"

"They say you do, Kate, marvellously."

"Then she must look like me," said Miss Ravenel, smiling.

"If I thought so, I would find her out and see her, to verify it. This paragraph speaks of a sister. He told me his mother was a widow. I fear that it is the same!"

"I hope not; for you thought so highly of him."

"Yes; I was only yesterday saying that I should like to find him again, to take him with me on my yacht expedition down to Portland. I can ascertain by going to the prison, which I will do to-morrow as I go down town. I am really interested to know if it is he. Perhaps, if it is he, he may not be guilty. The first thing is charity; and charity supposes every suspected person innocent until he is found guilty."

"Then I would go and see him, at least for his widowed mother's sake," said Kate. "It is possible you may be of service to him."

"My curiosity, if nothing more, will take me to the Tombs to-morrow. Now, dear Kate, try and rally. I know you feel better since you have made me the confidant of your little Jewish romance, and have got my sympathy."

The next morning, about ten o'clock, Guy Ravenel turned out of Broadway in his olive-panneled English buggy, drawn by a powerful but superb horse, and a "tiger" in livery, in the shape of a florid English boy, on the seat by his side.

He drew up shortly after at the Egyptian front of the City Prison. An officer approached him, recognising him to be one of the rich young men of the city, and, bowing civilly, said:

"Then my fears are realized. It is you, then, Wyndham, whom the papers alluded to. I was really in hopes that, notwithstanding the similarity of the name, I should find here a perfect stranger."

"I wish you had done so, Mr Ravenel. I, at least, ought not to have been found here. I am innocent of the crime for which I am committed to this dreadful place."

"I wish from my heart, Wyndham, I could credit your words. You seem to speak with the air and accents of an innocent person."

"As true as I hope to see my Maker in peace hereafter, Mr Ravenel, I am innocent. The whole thing came upon me all at once, like a stroke of lightning. I had no preparation for it, not a moment. The first I knew, the officers were at my bedside, their lanterns glaring me in the face. Without a word of explanation, they arrested me, and brought me to the police-station. The next morning I was taken before a magistrate, and, being charged with having robbed three letters in the post office, I was committed to prison here to await my trial. But I know nothing about the letters. The testimony was that they were found in my pockets."

"What! on your person?"

"Not on my person, but in the pockets of my office jacket, after I had gone home."

"Where did your jacket hang?"

"On a rack in the office with those of several other clerks' jackets. The story, as it was given in the testimony, was this:—

"There were three letters missing, one addressed to Mr Moncure, containing \$500; another to a Mr

"Do you wish to find any one, sir?"

"The room of the Warden or Superintendent's office of the prison, sir. Can you direct me to it?"

"Yes. But do you wish to go into the prison? There is the person who will give you admittance."

Ravenel advanced to the person, and, handing him an order from the City Recorder (whom Ravenel had called on for it, as he was his near neighbour, before coming down town), which gave him permission to see the prisoner Wallace Wyndham; such a permit, at the time of our story, being necessary--but matters of this sort are now more easily managed.

The ponderous lock was turned, and Ravenel felt a cold thrill, as the door which had admitted him, closed behind him, and secured him within the strong walls.

"Here, Morely, show this gentleman to No. 4."

Under his guidance, Mr Ravenel traversed the stone floor, and went quickly past the fetid-smelling cell windows, until he came to the door of a cell at the extremity of the passage, along which he had walked after his guide.

"This, sir, is where you will find the person," said the guide, gruffly. "In for robbing the mail."

At the extremity of the cell stood Wallace, facing the door, and eagerly watching to see who was about to visit him.

"O! Mr Ravenel," he exclaimed. "Is it you who have come to see me?" he said, with looks in which shame and pleasure struggled. "I thought everybody had cast me off. You are very kind."

Ravenel saw that he spoke with deep emotion. He approached him, after the turnkey had locked him in with the prisoner, and said, kindly but sorrowfully:

Campbell, containing a check for \$800, and some bank-notes, making a \$1,000 in all; and a third letter, addressed to Colonel —, the postmaster, with \$55. That these three letters, being missed, were searched for by the aid of the police, and found at last in the pockets of my linen jacket!

"When they opened the letters, the contents of the first two were taken out; but the money in the colonel's letter was still there. Upon this I was arrested in my bed the same night."

"And you profess entire ignorance, Wyndham, as to the manner in which the letters came into your pocket?"

"I do, sir, most solemnly. When I hung up my jacket to resume my street-coat, I am confident they were not there. I did not put them there. I had no knowledge of the existence of such letters."

"You assert your innocence?"

"Before my God!"

"I believe you. Is this all the testimony they have against you?"

"There is one point more, Mr Ravenel," answered Wyndham, with flashing and indignant looks. "It seems to have been a deep-laid plan to ruin me by some one."

Ravenel watched his face closely, and said, within himself: "This face wears the look of innocence, but the facts bear the stamp of guilt. What is this other point?"

"The darkest of all. It was proven before the magistrate by the teller, that I had presented to him, and that he had paid to me, the very check for \$800 which the letter to Mr Campbell had contained."

"And did you present that check to him?"

"I did, sir!"

"And receive the money?"

"I did," answered Wyndham, almost choking.

"Then, sir, I have no further business or duty here," answered Ravenel, rising from a wooden settee on which he had seated himself opposite the prisoner. "The law must take its course. How could you assert your innocence, and even enlist my sympathies (supposing it possible another purloiner might have placed the letters in your pocket) with such a damning conclusion coming behind?"

"Hear me, Mr Ravenel. Do not judge me until you hear all. Listen to my explanation."

"I listen," said Ravenel, coldly, but not resuming his sitting posture. "I am ready to hear what you have to say."

"The day before yesterday, while I was in the office, a lad came up to me——"

"Who was the lad?"

"A boy of thirteen or fourteen, called Billy, who went errands for the clerks and others. He had in his hand a check for \$800, drawn to the order of Allan Campbell."

"The broker?"

"Yes, sir."

"I know him. He rents his office from me. Go on."

"The boy said, handing it to me, that Colonel ——, the postmaster, wished me to go to the bank and get the money on it. I did not hesitate to do so. The boy accompanied me, as he said, to take the money back to the colonel. Upon my arrival at the bank, I

presented the check. The teller merely remarked, 'It is not endorsed by Colonel ——.' I replied that I did not notice the fact, and would take or send it back for his indorsement, supposing that it had been transferred to the colonel by Mr Campbell, and the former had forgotten to endorse it before giving it to the boy. I gave it to the lad, and told him to go at once to the post office, get the indorsement, and hasten to me with it. I remained at the bank full a quarter of an hour, awaiting his return. When he came back, he handed me the check indorsed, and the teller at once gave me the money upon it. When we reached the post office door, I gave the money to the boy, and told him to take it at once to the colonel."

"Well!" ejaculated Ravenel, interrogatively and expectantly.

"At the magistrate's, the colonel denied ever having seen the check, or sent it by the boy to me, or indorsed the check at all; while the teller testified that the check was handed to him by me the second time, indorsed with the colonel's name. Upon this new and overwhelming testimony I was at once committed to prison to await my trial on the charge, not only of robbing the letters, but of——"

Wyndham could not articulate the word, and Mr Ravenel added, "Of forgery."

CHAPTER X.

THE words with which the last chapter closes had scarcely escaped the lips of Ravenel ere a rattling at the iron-banded door and the voice of the turnkey, drew his attention and that of poor Wyndham, who,

with his face buried in his hands, sat upon the side of his cot-bed.

"Number four," said the man outside, "here's a couple of women come to see you."

Wallace at once recognized his mother, and, springing forward, said, as he embraced her:

"Mother, O my dearest mother! that you should meet your son in such a place as this!"

"It is God's will, Wallace," she said, after a moment's abandonment to grief in his arms—"it is His will, who sees not as we see. I know you are innocent. I feel that you are still, as ever, worthy of my love."

"Thank God that you believe me innocent! And my sister, what a place for her to come into!"

"O Wallace, my poor, dear brother!" cried Magdalene, "we know you are not guilty. It is all some dreadful mystery—some conspiracy, I have no doubt, as Mr Spinker has said."

"Spinker!" repeated Wallace, with a start, and complete change of manner.

"He has been very kind," said the widow. "He came last night to condole with us. He said he was sure you must be shown to be innocent."

"I am sorry he has been there. This distresses me. Please, dear mother, do not see him again. He is a bad man. I do not wish him to see my sister. His look—his touch is pollution."

"Then you know Spinker?" remarked Ravenel to Wallace.

"Yes, sir. Do you? Ah, pardon me, Mr Ravenel, this is my mother. This is my sister, Magdalene."

Ravenel bowed with profound respect to the tearful mother, who scarcely raised her head, and in whose appearance and manners he saw the impress of a true lady; but he took the hand of the beautiful Magdalene with a sort of resistless impulse, so much was she like his sister in height, features, and carriage, and said:

"I sympathize with you, Miss Wyndham, in the present position of your brother. Although circumstances are dark against him, yet his innocence may yet be established."

"O sir, I am thankful to you for those words," said Mrs Wyndham, looking up through her tears. "I do not know who you are; but I feel you must be Wallace's friend, to visit him here."

"Mr Ravenel is the gentleman Wallace spoke of, mother, as the owner of the yacht," said Magdalene.

"Yes. Then you knew my noble boy? O sir, could he have done this thing?"

"I hope he will yet prove his innocence, dear madam," answered Ravenel. "But he cannot prove it without making first manifest the guilt of some other party."

"That is my only hope and chance of escape," answered Wallace. "Unless I can show who placed the letters in my pocket—"

"And gave the check to the boy—"

"Yes."

"For the boy must have been the agent or tool of another one, to have got the check indorsed. Now, Mr Wyndham, pardon me. You feel how strong are the facts as elicited against you. I am ready to be your friend, and help you, if you are innocent. I now ask you in the presence of God, of your mother and

sister, are you innocent of these offences one and all with which you are so gravely charged, and for which your country has cast you into this prison?"

"Mr Ravenel, I have nothing but words to reply with—words of denial of guilt and attestation of innocence, which the guilty can make use of with equal readiness. Yet believe me when, before God and my mother, and my sister and you, I re-assert that I am innocent!"

"Enough!" answered Ravenel, shaking him frankly by the hand. "I believe you!"

And his eyes filled with tears. Wallace buried his face upon the hand which clasped his, and sobbed like a child, completely overcome by his emotions.

Mrs Wyndham exclaimed:

"God be thanked! I knew my boy was innocent; and now-I am so sure that nothing could move me, for that word was spoken with the tones of truth; and a mother's heart cannot be deceived in the accents of her child's tongue."

"I am made so happy, Wallace," said Magdalene, kneeling by his side, and bending her head, from which the veil had fallen, upon his shoulder, over which the rich flood of her bright tresses flowed like a sunny-waved rivulet of light. For a moment the group thus remained. Wallace first moved; but the sudden dead weight of his sister's head upon his shoulder showed him that she had fainted.

"Lift her up, Mr Ravenel, if you please. She is insensible."

The young man disengaged his hand from that of Wallace, and bending over the fair girl, gently raised her in his arms.

"She requires air. Open quickly!" he called to the turnkey.

"I am better now. I can stand without assistance."

"Permit me to support you with my arm. You are very weak," he said, tenderly.

"Wallace," whispered his mother, eagerly, "the way is clear—fly. You are innocent. Escape before the jailor comes back."

"No, dearest mother. The law which placed me here must take me out and proclaim my innocence, which it has suspected. I have told Mr Ravenel all the particulars. I would like to tell you also; but this place is too close for you and sister. If Mr Ravenel will be so kind as to let you know exactly the facts?"

"That I will do, Wyndham," answered the young man, in hearty tones.

There was a brief but painful parting. Ravenel took leave of Wallace, saying:

"Keep up your courage. I am ready to assert your innocence, and to try to have it proved. One question I wish to ask you," he added in an under tone.

"Well, sir?"

"Have you any suspicions of any one in the office?"

"No, sir; there is no one I can suspect."

"Had you no enemy there?"

"There is Spinker. He has no reason to like me. I did not like his attentions to my sister, and told him so."

"Humph," ejaculated Ravenel; "when did you tell him so?"

"Three days ago, in the office."

"Have you any knowledge of him?"

"Only that he bears the reputation of being a dissolute young man, and wholly unprincipled."

"His character perfectly, if you had added, 'and vain and conceited as a monkey.'"

"Now, where shall I find that boy, Billy?"

"About the post office."

"Very good. Now, I will leave you, to accompany your mother and sister to the outside of the prison; for this is a rude place for ladies."

"Thank you, Mr Ravenel. My family has moved in a different sphere. But we are humble enough now, with these prison walls inclosing me."

"Wallace, I am more and more persuaded that some other person will ere long take your place here for the guilt of which you are but charged. I am persuaded of your innocence; yet I must confess, did I not know you, circumstances are so strong against you I should condemn you on the face of them. Now, good-bye. Cheer up. You will hear from me soon."

"Be sure, Mr Ravenel, if I were not innocent, I would not suffer you to go forward in an investigation which would only prove to you my guilt. I thank you from my heart."

Ravenel, finding that they had come in none of the hacks standing in front of the prison, immediately ordered one, and placed them in it. Then asking the address of the grateful mother, he gave it to the driver, and giving orders to his footman to "follow," he got in with them, saying he would see them home; and the carriage rolled away from the gloomy precinct.

When the coach stopped before the humble abode of the widow, Magdalene blushed to think of the mean appearance it must present to the eyes of the

elegant Mr Ravenel; and he detected the expression of her face and comprehended it, but said nothing.

"I would ask you in, sir, but——"

"I desire to come in, Mrs Wyndham," he answered, interrupting her; "as I wish to fulfil my promise to your son to make known to you what he has related to me, and which he would not keep you in his gloomy cell to repeat."

"You are very kind, sir."

Magdalene, like most young persons, felt embarrassed that the rich Mr Ravenel should go in and see how poor they lived; but her excellent good sense at once corrected this momentary feeling; and she, with attractive courtesy, led the way to the door, and ushered him in.

"Mr Ravenel, I will not excuse my house to you," said Mrs Wyndham, offering him a chair.

"If you did, dear madam, I should respect you less. Everybody in New York doesn't live in a brown-stone front! I hope, however," he said, glancing round upon the humble but perfectly neat room, "that brighter days will yet come. Whose exquisite work is this?" he asked, looking at a landscape with a villa newly finished in embroidery. "Why, is it possible? This is a view of my place—Deer Ridge, on the Hudson! and an admirable view it is!"

"Of your place, Mr Ravenel?" asked the maiden with surprise and pleasure.

"Yes, certainly. Is it your work?"

"It is mine," answered Magdalene with embarrassment, under the fixed gaze he gave her. "But I did not know whose place it was."

"The original was taken in colours by my sister."

"Here is what I copy it from." And she handed him a picture finely done on canvas.

"It is my sister Kate's picture! I have seen it a dozen times. This is odd! How came you by it, Miss Wyndham?"

"The person for whom I embroider, sir, gave it to me, saying a lady desired it copied for a screen. Here is another—a view of the Hudson and its vessels, which is to match it." And she produced a second picture, the mate to the former, and evidently by the same hand.

"It was my sister who did these! She evidently is the lady! How remarkable I should find them here, and copied by you with the needle! And your silks vie with the colours on the palette! I know not which has displayed the most skill, the copiest or the original artist!"

The introduction of the two pictures seemed to be a sort of bond of good feeling between the parties; and, after a few minutes' conversation, during which Ravenel's favourable estimation of the young embroidress increased, he said, turning to the mother:

"Let us not forget Wallace! I will now relate what he told me about his arrest."

He then proceeded to give them a distinct narrative of the facts as he heard them from Wallace, and which they had had no opportunity of knowing. During the recital, the hopes and fears of Mrs Wyndham alternated; but when she found that he had actually presented a draft taken from the letter found in his pocket, with a forged endorsement of the post-master's name, she came near fainting.

"Oh, Mr Ravenel, can he be saved?" cried Magdalene, with deep earnestness, and looking to him as if her brother's fate depended on him alone.

"Do you both believe him innocent with all these circumstances?" he asked gravely.

"He cannot have done it! He is innocent. My son is not guilty!"

"Oh, my brother could not have committed all these dreadful crimes! He could not have become a great criminal in one day!"

Thus together the mother and daughter asserted their confidence in Wallace's innocence.

"I am strengthened in my opinion that he has been wronged. There must be a conspiracy of which he is—"

"Mr Spinker's very words!" said Mrs Wyndham.

"Spinker again!" repeated Ravenel, half audibly. "This man's name keeps rising up like an ill flavour in my nostrils. What do you know of him?"

"Only that he is in the post office, and had a window near my brother," answered Magdalene. "He has been here twice only. Once to say how much he regretted Wallace's misfortune."

"Your brother does not like him?"

"No," answered the maiden; "nor do any of us. Miss Moncure says she is sure he is a very bad man."

"Miss Moncure! The rich Jew's daughter?"

"Yes, sir," answered Miss Wyndham.

"Do you know her?"

"Yes; she is a friend of Wallace's. She has been here. She is very kind, and is such a lovely and good girl, if she is a Jewess."

"Then you know Miss Moncure?" he repeated,

musingly. "This is another odd coincidence," he said to himself.

"My brother did her and her father a kindness, by rescuing them from violence on the street one night; and it was through Mr Moncure he got this unfortunate place in the post office."

"And one of the letters opened was to Mr Moncure. That makes the case so much severer against him," said his mother.

"Be sure that Wallace never opened these letters! I have resolved to search the matter to its end. I will let you hear from me again. In the meantime, remain quietly at home. It will do no good for you to visit your son—it will distress him."

In a few moments he was driving up the street in his elegant landau in the direction of Broadway, every few seconds murmuring:

"How beautiful. How modest and simple in her manners. What good sense and deep feeling. What exquisite taste in dress. What talent. How wonderfully like Kate, too. Even the tones of the voice. Ah, Ravenel, take care of thy heart! There will be trouble at home among the proud ones of my family if I should entangle myself so irrevocably in love with this charming embroideress as to be unhappy without marrying her!"

The last words seemed to startle him.

"Marry! Is not her brother in a felon's cell? But I must see what I can do for him, for his sake and hers; and shall I say, O Ravenel, for thine. Not yet."

CHAPTER XI.

WE will now return to the dark-eyed Jewish maiden. Our readers will remember that when we last saw her at the humble abode of the mother of Wallace Wyndham, it was decided that she should return the next morning, and, disguised as Magdalene, visit the prisoner in company with his mother, leaving his sister at home.

It was with this intention that she took her departure for home. She had traversed four or five squares, when, as she drew near the quarter of the city where she lived, she was conscious that a person was pursuing her. The footfall she heard some time before, but now became convinced that it was a man following her as rapidly as she went.

There was a familiarity in the tread that aroused her wildest fears; and, gathering her veil and shawl more closely about her, she flew forward at increased speed. Breathless, she reached her father's door, and was about to enter, when she felt her arm grasped firmly by the pursuer, while in a sharp whisper her brother's voice breathed savagely in her ear:

"Traitor! I knew that I should detect you. I've verified my suspicions. I have watched you. In with you."

As he spoke, she having succeeded in unlatching the door, he thrust her before him into the hall. She did not lose her self-possession.

"Brother, do not arouse father. I will explain all to you."

"So, then, I am now confirmed in my two-fold suspicions," he said, in a menacing tone. "I followed you.

I was at my window when you went out, partly disguised. You thought I was at the club, I dare say. Your stealthy manner, your closely-drawn veil, roused my suspicions. I saw you enter the abode of the family of the young Nazarene, now in prison for robbery and forgery. Resolved to see the end, I waited till you came out. First came forth a foppish fellow. Who was he?—a puppy I've seen about town."

"I do not know him. I never saw him before," answered Rachel. "They call him Mr Spinker."

"What did you go to that house for?"

"To see the mother and sister of the young man who is in prison," she answered, and so openly that he looked surprised.

"What had you to do with them, or about him?"

"You know, brother, he did me and my dear father a kindness. I felt grateful to him. He had spoken to me of his mother; and when I heard he was in prison, I obeyed the impulse of my feelings, and hastened to sympathize with her and comfort her."

This frank avowal disconcerted him. It was quite unlooked for. He changed his ground.

"Rachel, I am satisfied that this visit had more to do with Wyndham than his mother and mere sympathy. You can't deceive me. Your eyes betray what is in your heart. I have marked every changing glance, every look and motion about you, when Wyndham has been spoken of; and I made up my mind that you were in love with him. You are silent. You do not deny it," he continued, with increased violence. "Do you deny it?"

The lovely damsel was as truthful as she was beautiful. She did love him, and she felt that she loved him

more for his misfortunes; for she was convinced that he was innocent, and would be proven so. She was silent.

"Yes. There you stand, traitress, false daughter of Abraham, the convicted lover of a Christian! and what is more, you do not abandon this evil passion when he has been arrested on a charge of theft and forgery, when he has even robbed a letter of your father, his benefactor! What shall I think of you? And then to steal away in disguise to his mother's, and return after dark, very improperly, setting all the laws of womanly delicacy at defiance."

"Brother, I have listened to you. To say I am wholly uninterested in that young man would be to stain my soul with falsehood! But I have done nothing unworthy. It was natural I should see the lonely widow."

"Enough! Let that pass! He is in prison, and you will never see him more! That is some satisfaction! So this foolish passion will die out as quickly as it was kindled! And now I would advise you to quench it as soon as possible, for you must receive my friend, Mr Levi, as your lover!"

"I have never seen him!"

"Your facility in falling in love will remedy that. If I mistake not, three weeks ago you never saw this Wyndham!" he said, ironically. "But you need not say no! It is a fixed affair between father and myself that you marry Levi!"

"I will not marry him!" answered Rachel, her dark eye flashing, and her whole fearless and proud spirit aroused. Besides, my heart is my own, and not for you or my father to make merchandise of. I understand well your motives. If my father had lost his

fortune, and were a poor man, and my consent to the marriage with Mr Levi were necessary to enrich him, I would not hesitate even to sacrifice myself for my father's good. But no such necessity exists."

As she bent forward, a glittering object sprang from her bosom, and swung in the light. His quick eye detected a glittering cross. He bounded forward with a Jewish execration, and tore it with violence from her neck.

"An accursed cross! This is enough! You are a Christian! May the God of Jacob send upon you the blasts of His fierce anger! It is now a fact not to be gainsaid. There is all the secret for your wild regard for Wyndham. Either because you were a Christian you loved him, or he has made you one."

The maiden rose to her feet. She was deadly pale. Her eye was full of courage. Her face shone with the resolution of a martyr. She spoke calmly but steadily:

"Brother, I was a Christian before I ever saw Mr Wyndham. The mantle of Israel dying fell upon me. I am a Christian, even as he was. I read his books. I have remembered his words! I have read the Gospels of Jesus! I have received letters from a lovely Christian lady who taught Israel, which have convinced me that Jesus was the Messiah of Moses and the Prophets, and that we Jews are not to look for another."

The young Israelite instantly drew from his bosom a stiletto. He sprang toward his sister, and, seizing her by the shoulder, was about to bury it in her bosom, the while uttering these words: "I offer thee, woman, a sacrifice to the insulted faith thou hast outraged! Death, rather than infamy like thine!"

Without resistance; without a word; with a look of the most perfect submission to her fate, the lovely Christian Jewess stood before him, awaiting the blow.

But it fell not. This supernatural composure unnerved him. He was not prepared for it. If she had lifted a hand to resist, she would have died in his rage. He dropped the point of the dagger, and, releasing his hold of her, said, bitterly:

"You deserve to die! But I spare you! Thank my forbearance. Two Christians in the family of the Moncures! If Levi knew this he would spurn you and us!"

He paced the room. He seemed determining upon some purpose. She remained immovable, watching him. If she had not been fully confirmed in her Christian faith, this violence would have sealed it upon her; and if she had not fully resolved to love Wyndham with all her heart, this opposition would have settled her mind to love him.

"Enough," said he, at length. "The ice is broken. We are foes! Remain here. You are my prisoner. If you create any alarm or disturbance, to try to get out noisily, I will make known to my father all. At present he knows but little, and only suspects. If I should reveal to him what I know and you have confessed, I need not tell you what your fate would be. You have heard how terrible is the vengeance of our nation when it punishes in secret council those who prove traitors to Israel."

Thus menacing, he placed his dagger in his bosom, and left the room, locking the door after him. Rachel heard his retreating footsteps on the hall stairs. She listened until all was still, and then sinking upon

her knees, she gathered the pieces of the broken cross from the carpet, kissed and pressed them to her bosom, and said, prayerfully:

“Lord Jesus, defend thy child! Though unbaptized with water in Thy name, I am Thine.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE reader will now comprehend why the beautiful Jewess could not be present the next morning after her visit to Mrs Wyndham, to visit the prison with her, and why, after waiting in vain long past the hour, the mother and daughter decided to go together.

Mrs Wyndham and her fair daughter are at home awaiting to hear from Ravenel, according to his promise, that he would investigate the whole affair, and see if there were any chances of establishing the innocence of Wallace; and while they waited sorrowfully and hopefully, like true, brave women, they did not sit idly, and weep and lament, but went to work, one with her needle, the other with her pencil, to try and earn money to fee a lawyer for their brother's defence; for Mrs Wyndham had resolved not to make use of one dollar of the amount Mr Ravenel had so generously left with her, unless it were absolutely necessary to do so for the safety of Wallace.

We left Spinker rejoicing in the success of his conspiracy, and looking forward to see Wallace Wyndham sent to the Penitentiary, and his mother and daughter thrown protectorless upon the world, and ready to receive the protection of one who, like himself, had money to keep them from poverty and want.

Ravenel, after leaving the widow's, hastened home

to consult with his sister, whose advice he had from experience learned to place great confidence in. Upon reaching home, he found upon his table his morning mail. Until Kate could see him, he sat down to peruse his letters. One of them was a request for money, but another was to the following effect:—

TO G. RAVENEL, ESQ.

"SIR,—I consider that your reply to my note and box of cigars a palpable and outrageous insult to my honour and position as a gentleman. I demand satisfaction, sir! My friend, Lieutenant Crimps, will call on you in person, sir, sometime this morning, being now engaged in buying me a pair of duelling-pistols. Your aristocratic insolence in looking down upon me—one as good as yourself—is past bearing, sir!

"Name your time and place.

"P.S.—The bearer, Lieutenant Lafayette Crimps, is a gentleman, sir, and does nothing for a living, like yourself, and you need not disdain to deal with him.

"I am, sir, with the most distinguished con., yr. ob. ser.,
without resp.,

"SPENCE SPINKER."

"Ha, ha, ha! upon my word, admirable! This gentleman's feathers are fairly up," laughed Ravenel, as he ended the letter. "Well, so I've got a duel on my hands—a challenge to mortal combat! If I did not know the malevolence and vanity of this fellow, I should regard this letter as a quiz, but it bears the impress of Spinker, the Bowery Beau Brummel."

"There is a military jintleman at the door, sir!" said the footman, entering and bowing respectfully.

"Indeed! who is he?"

"I don't know, sir; he coom in a hack."

"Ask him for his card, James."

"LIEUTENANT LAFAYETTE CRIMPS,

"Cavalry Co. A, Fourth Brigade, First Division.

"N. Y. S. M."

"This is Spinker's military friend," said Ravenel, with a quiet smile. "Show him in, James."

The next moment, James, with a series of great and respectful bows, ushered in a short, fat, oily-cheeked little man, arrayed in a military hat, long sword, yellow cotton epaulettes, and enormous spurs, and an exceedingly red nose.

The face of the little man was full-charged with dignified hostility. Before Ravenel could make up his mind to address him, he said, in a voice thin and squeaky, but as sharp as a creaking wheel:

"I'm Crimps, sir; Lieutenant Crimps, sir."

"Happy to see you, sir. Take a seat, sir," said Ravenel, in the blandest way imaginable.

"No, sir; I never sit in the presence of a foe! I have come, sir, to ask you, sir—yes, sir, to demand of you, sir, if you have received the challenge of my principal, Mr Spinker?"

"I was just reading it when you were summoned, Lieutenant Crimpsy."

"Crimps, sir, not Crimpsy! old family the Crimps, sir; came over with the great Deidrich Knickerbocker, sir!"

"I am happy to be corrected. Do you take wine, Lieutenant. Of course you do, as a soldier. James, bring me wine. But stay, possibly Mr Crimps may prefer some good old brandy. Here is some champagne imported by myself. You will be pleased with it."

Crimps' eye sparkled full of beads as he received the foaming glass; and nodding, he gave "The Army!" and emptied the glass.

"Excellent! Admirable! Beautiful! That's what I call wine! Champagne? No, sir! Champagne

never knew that wine! It is nectar! No champagne about it! It is real delight! Be that its name! Certainly, sir! Another glass? Could not refuse a whole bottle!" When the bottle was emptied, chiefly by the soldier, Ravenel, seeing his eyes glance toward the topaz and ruby wines, said: "Champagne is but a mere palate zester. Here is a good Madeira. Let me fill your glass."

"With the greatest pleasure. Ah, sir, this is the pure juice of the grape! Delicious! Pah-h-h! How oily it flows down!"

"Try the sherry. This is the old Xeres wine which Ferdinand forbade to be drank save by the royal families and the bishops."

"I'll be sure to try it, Mr Ravenel. Ah, ha! Whuff—ff! It is enough to give kings wisdom! I esteem it the happiest hour of my life, my dear sir! Pardon me if I am too familiar; but good wine makes fellow-feeling among us all. A new world of delight is opened upon me to-day. Bless me! Is it possible I put on my military suit and buckled on my armour to come hear to declare war against a man who keeps such wines as these? Brandy? To be sure! I'll try a thimbleful. But as I'm now in the sixth heaven, I have no doubt it'll take me to the seventh at last. Call this brandy! Smooth as oil of olives! Tastes like the ottar of violets. It fills the inner eye with visions of beauty. What a happy fellow you are to have such wines and brandies every day! Mr Ravenel, I hope we'll be friends."

"How can we be friends, Lieutenant," asked Ravenel, "if your friend and I am to fight?"

"Fight? Who says fight? Sninker? Who is he?"

Don't know such a fellow. Deuce take him. Paltry fifty dollars. Does he think Crimps can be bought for fifty dollars? Thank you, Captain Ravenel, a little! Spinker is a fool! Don't fight him. Fifty dollars! Major Ravenel, what is fifty dollars to be a second with such a brave Colonel as you are to fight against? No, General, no, Major-General Ravenel! Spinker is but a miserable private, and he isn't a private, for he never shouldered a musket. Excellent wine! admirable brandy! heavenly champagne! Fifty dollars!"

"What is this fifty dollars, Lieutenant, which seems to annoy you?"

"It does annoy me! Spinker read me your note. He asked me to be his second. I said, Spinker, fifty dollars and it's done! He agreed to it, and so did I! So I came here, but if I'd known that I was to call on such a proper gentleman, who keeps such capital brandy and excellent wines, I wouldn't have come on this errand under a cool hundred; and a man who gets money as easy as he does, can pay the hundred as easy as fifty!"

"How does he get money easy?" asked Ravenel, who saw that his visitor was ready to reveal anything, for which end he had systematically, as we have seen, plied him freely with his wines; for he had seen in Crimps an intimate of Spinker, who might be of service in enabling him to learn something of the latter; for when the wine is in the wit is out.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIEUTENANT CRIMPS was not so far gone into the realms of vinous folly that he had not yet left about him some of his native shrewdness; for shrewd he was. He had been a dealer in a small grocery way in the Bowery, and being a third cousin of Spinker, he used at hard times to favour him with a loan of a few dollars. Being of a martial turn, he had enlisted in the volunteer company which had its armoury next door to his grocery; and so by degrees he rose to be a lieutenant; but as he was an extravagant dog, and spent more than he made in dress and liquors, he soon broke as a grocer, and lived on the town as a private gentleman, chiefly supporting himself by borrowing money, gaming, and even, on occasion, passing counterfeit money. He was an excellent adjunct for such a person as Spinker, who more than once had got him, for a certain amount, to go to the bank with drafts purloined from letters. In a word, he was a sharer in Spinker's speculations, and was up to all his transactions; but gold kept his lips sealed; for he looked mainly to Spinker's need of him to get funds.

This was the "second" whom Spinker delegated to Fourteenth Street to act as his friend.

"How does he get his money easy?" repeated Crimps. "There's the secret!"

"What will you take for your secret?" asked Ravenel, for he saw exactly the sort of man he had to deal with.

"Why do you think I have one?"

"Because you said so," said Ravenel, quietly.

"Did I? Then I must have one. Deuced goo!"

brandy. How odd it is a fellow after a few rounds of good liquor is always sure to see the world revolve on its axis. I feel it go round just as plain. Nothing like good wine to open a man's perceptions. Confound it! don't we go round fast, though?"

"Sixty thousand miles an hour."

"More than that. Secret! How—how—mu—much for—for—it?"

"A hundred dollars!"

"Good! Count it out!"

"There it is, in five twenty-dollar gold pieces!"

"Good!"

"Secret! What did I say? Oh, money easy, to be sure. Gets it mighty easy. Post office, you know, clerk. Plenty letters. Money in some of 'em. Don't tell Spinker. Easy to melt the wax, soften the paste—*presto!* there is the money!—bills, checks, drafts, inside in full view. Who could help, helping one's self? Not cousin Spinker."

"And he gets his money so?"

"To—be—sure! Don't mention it. Another golden glass! Here's health to eternal secrecy. He's my third cousin is Spinker. Wouldn't like to have him exposed. Purely confidential you know, Ravenel, eh? Secrets are safe be-be-tween f-f-friends, you un-un-derstand?"

"Perfectly, captain," answered Ravenel, quite amused and equally disgusted; but he had an object in view, upon which light was already thrown. "We are friends so far. How does Spinker get his money?"

"By, you know, hot water and mucilage, wafers and sealing-wax!"

"I think I understand you."

"Another glass! What an elysium your cellar must be. Would be willing to be your butler, Ravenel. Wouldn't object to your keeping the keys so I kept a gimlet. Understand me. Do you want me to tell openly on cousin Spink', and say he robs the mails? Walls have ears. But when he wants money he has it."

"Do you know that he has ever taken money out of letters?"

"Knowing is seeing. Never saw him do it. A small drop of that champagne. Oh! all gone! Then brandy! Spinker would betray his own secret if he was here. Seeing is believing. Never saw him, only he has told me so. I got my share for services. General, here's to your wife and children."

"And to your ancestors, Captain. Where is Spinker to be found, say about ten o'clock at night?"

"Not knowing, can't say. Do you mean to fight him?"

"Oh, let us sing of a fighting king,
Who fought and——"

"Are you and I not friends?" said Ravenel, interrupting his song.

"There is my hand on it."

Ravenel, instead of taking his hand, placed a glass of wine in it.

"Try that, Mr Crimps."

"Honey and dew! Spinker can be found at 112 Carleton, when he is abed. After 5 p. m., he promenades Broadway or drives on Third Avenue. Plenty o' money! His bank never fails. But, eh-h! Ravenel, what shall I say to him?"

"Tell him, if he will meet me to-morrow at ten

o'clock, behind the City Hall, armed with a sword, I will gratify him and give him his deserts."

"Good! That is warlike. But please take note that I shall be on the ground only as his friend (apparently), while I am yours really. We will be only outwardly foes. I don't wish to lose my fifty."

"You shan't lose it. I appreciate your position. You mean only to play the foe, being my true friend?"

"Exactly. How pleasant it is to deal with gentlemen."

All this was said with incoherent tipsiness of articulation.

"Good morning, Lieutenant. James, this gentleman wishes to go."

Scarcely had Crimps left, ere the door of Ravenel's study opened, and his sister entered.

"You seem to have had an odd guest, brother."

"An odd fish! Can you guess his errand?"

"I overheard part of it, as the door was ajar, and instead of coming in I went back. He seemed to want to buy your wines. Was he a wine merchant?"

"No; a wine-bibber, and a great sinner. He came to bring a challenge to me from Spinker. You know the fellow I sent the box of cigars back to? He has got his ire up and his courage too, and sent me a polite invitation to meet him in civil combat."

"You are not going to meet him?" cried Kate with alarm.

"I think it likely we shall meet; and I shall have the Chief of Police for my second. This Spinker, on the showing of his friend Crimps, is a great rogue, and gets the money he spends so lavishly to imitate young men of fortune, by purloining it from letters in the

post office, where he is engaged as a clerk! I was this very afternoon going into the city to find out what I could about the character and antecedents of that man. So this warlike Mr Crimps came just in time. You are aware of the interest I take in Wyndham. Since I left you this morning I have seen him in prison."

"Do you think he is innocent?" asked Kate eagerly.

"I have very little doubt about it. But it has to be proven. The facts are very hard against him. He must prove others guilty before he can make apparent his own innocence!"

"That must be a most difficult thing to do!"

"Without question! But Wyndham must not be deserted. He needs aid. I saw his mother and sister, who came to see him in the prison. My sympathies were deeply enlisted for them. The mother, who is a widow and in humble circumstance, has evidently seen better days. She looks like a lady 'in the sere and yellow leaf,' as your favourite poet says, you read to me yesterday!"

"Is the sister like me?" asked Kate with a smile, "for you know the brother told you so!"

"She is so like you, that I believe if an artist were to paint both your likenesses in like costume, it would be difficult to say which was Kate Ravenel or which Magdalene Wyndham!"

"Magdalene! What a singular name! I am dying with curiosity to see one who looks like me. It is better than looking into a full-length mirror; for the opposite figure is a living one! Has she my eyes?"

"Perfectly."

"My hair?"

"Exactly, only not dressed so fully up to the fashion; but it might be, for it is a superb suit."

"My lips?"

"Her mouth is not so haughtily shaped as yours, nor its expression quite so exquisite, yet it would be hard to tell which mouth was the loveliest; for sometimes I thought it was yours; and then I thought, as the expression changed and played, that it was hers."

"You seem to have studied her," said his sister, with a slight tone of *esprit*.

"How could I help keeping my eyes fixed constantly upon one who momentarily reminded me of you, my dearest Kate? I went home from the prison with them to talk with them about Wallace. All they told me of his character strengthened my conviction of his entire innocence. But look at this!"

And he took from his pocket a roll which, as he left the widow's, he had requested to be loaned to him. It was the needlework picture of his villa on the Hudson, done by Magdalene Wyndham.

"Where did you get that?" she cried, with mingled surprise and delight. "It is needlework. I first thought it was my own painting in colours. Where did you have this done?"

"Where is the original?"

"I left it at Madame Marzetti's to be copied with the needle for screens to present to you."

"How did I come there for the copy?" he asked mysteriously, "when I never heard you had left the copy at Marzetti's?"

"That I cannot tell."

"I will then make it known to you; as I wish to

interest you in the fair embroidress. But first tell me is it well done?"

"Perfectly. It surpasses my work. Who did it?"

"It was done by Miss Wyndham."

"The sister of the prisoner?"

"Yes. She embroiders to enable her to support her widowed mother. For a time, while her brother was an invalid, she contributed to his support and comfort, paid his medical bills, and supplied him with all those little comforts the sick covet so much; for, shut out from the world, they want the best part of the world brought to them at their bedsides. Marzetti gave your pictures to her to copy. I found them at her house. This was finished; the other is begun."

"How beautiful this is. She must be a superior girl."

"You need not ask Marzetti for the work when she has done it; for I intend to buy in of you or of Miss Wyndham. You can have your pictures again, and tell Marzetti to get them copied again by some one else."

"Blows the wind that way, Guy?" said his sister, archly. "I see that you are very much interested in that quarter."

"I confess it. Don't laugh at me, Kate. If you do, you must in part blame yourself; for I should not have thought of her a second time as I do, but for her likeness to you. Did I not tell you that I should remain single until I found your duplicate? I have found it."

"And her brother in prison."

"I fear this was spoken unkindly, Kate. It had a point in it."

"No, oh, no! If you love Miss Wyndham, I can love and will love her; for I know your taste and judgment are unfaltering; but I meant, what a pity that a young person who has interested you (for the first time in your life) should have a brother in prison. It was more in sorrow for your sake, brother, than in a satirical vein I said it. As to her being poor, that is a defect your wealth can in any moment remove. If she is accomplished and refined——"

"See her work before you."

"Educated?"

"I am sure she is."

"Graceful?"

"As I ever wish to see a woman."

"Beautiful?"

"As yourself; for you look like sisters."

"Well, I have done, then. We, being square, are to be rivals—but in love, brother. Don't frown; I see you are interested in her. So am I. Now, again, let me say, with still more sorrow, what a pity her brother is in prison! It will render impossible that you should ever express to her your sentiments, for you would not, in your sober senses, think for a moment seriously of a young girl in her false position. Of her poverty I do not speak—I may be poor (who knows?), and have to resort to my pencil—but of the disgrace attached to her family."

"I feel it all. I see it all. I shall not, therefore, let Miss Wyndham suspect my feelings towards her, unless her brother can be shown to be innocent."

"Can he be?"

"I believe so! I mean to make every effort to test it. You see, I have a great many motives to spur me

to the investigation. As for Wallace, he is a noble-hearted fellow, brave and sincere, or I never knew what these qualities are. His eye, clear and open as the sky; his smile, frank and genial as a child's; his words full of the deep tones of truth, cannot belong to a guilty person."

"What will you do?"

"I have already gained a great point by the tipsy confession of this Crimps. He confesses and betrays that his friend Spinker purloins money from letters. This leaves the weight of suspicion on this clerk's shoulders equally with that on Wyndham's. As soon as I dine, I am going down to the post office. I know Colonel —, the postmaster. I have certain objects in view. There is a boy I wish to see. Heaven grant that the result may be all I wish and hope for!"

"I trust so!" answered Kate, sincerely.

"I have news for you, too. Your fair Jewish friend, Miss Moncure, is known to the Wyndhams, and has been there (yesterday, I think) to see them, and not only expressed her sympathy but made offers of her purse."

"I am surprised, yet glad to hear it. How odd that she should also know and interest herself in this family."

"The key is, as Mrs Wyndham herself told me, that Wallace had rescued her and her father from ruffians one night, in reward for which the rich Israelite got him the clerkship in the post office, and the young lady gave him her heart—at least, took a deep interest in him."

"This is romantic enough. There seems to be a network of affinities and relations among us; for if

Rachel is interested in Wyndham, you are in his sister, and I in her. What mysterious sympathy is there which unites so strongly three families together so wholly unlike each other, and socially removed from each other."

"The network will be complete, Kate, if you chance to fall in love with young Moncure, her brother."

"I have never seen him," she answered, laughing; "and I shall hardly marry a Jew."

"How do you know? No girl knows her fate. She is a ticket in a lottery. It may be drawn by a Spaniard or Englishman, a Japanese or South-Sea Islander," he said, laughingly, as he rose to accompany her to an early dinner, *enfamille*, which he had ordered, that he might give the afternoon up to working for Wyndham.

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER Ravenel had dined, he habited himself in a rather plain and somewhat worn hunting-suit, with a slouched hat, which, to an ordinary citizen's eye, gave him the appearance of a common fellow "about town;" but to his own set, the look of one who had just come from a tramp over in the Jerseys after grouse and plover. Instead of taking his cab, he got into an omnibus on the corner of Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue, and went down Broadway. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon.

That famous thoroughfare was thronged with "the grave, the gay, the merry, and severe;" chastity and beauty walked behind sin and ugliness; and the rags of the beggar brushed against the broadcloth of Dives.

Passing the usual groups of blacklegs and houseless men, who pick their ever-clean teeth on the steps of the fashionable hotels, he at length pulled the stopping-cord as the omnibus drew near the neighbourhood of the post office. Alighting, he crossed the street and made his way to the place. As he drew near it, he slackened his pace, and seeing a woman selling fruit on the walk near, he came to her stall and purchased an apple, as an introduction to inquiries. From her appearance he judged her to be the woman whom Wyndham had described to him (at his request) as the mother of Billy.

"Fine apples, ma'am!"

"Phretty fair for the s'ason, sir."

"A hard trade you follow, exposed to the weather. You must make but little selling apples and nuts."

"Odds an ouns, I kape body and soul togeder, sir. Jiss make the two ends mate."

"Have you no husband?"

"Och, not a mon, sure. Isn't it sivin year come next St. Patrick's day he died o' not bein' able to git his brith for the asthma?"

"You have no children, then?"

"It's one lone boy I have—a mere babby—ony thirteen year—little Billy to the fore. But he is a wild lad, an' needs a mither's hand an' eye."

"He ought to assist you here. Does he do nothing?"

"He goes afther runnin' arrants for the young gintlemen in the post office; but he gambles away all the spalpeen earns. But he's been a good boy to-day, and somewhere in mighty loock, for he brought me 'a five,' and gave it his ould mither wid his blissin. It's

a good lad he is whin he plazes; and when he has plinty money he's sure to bring his mither some o' it."

"Where is Billy now?" asked Ravenel, who was deeply interested at hearing of the five dollars; as it went to confirm the narrative of Wallace Wyndham as to the agency of the boy in the cashing of the draft; and it was likely that the five dollars was paid him for his services by whoever employed him. Our readers know that Billy paid himself, by embezzling, and so following his employer's example.

"Och, an' how suld I know, sir? It may be he's here—may be he's there. Can ye tell me where the wind is? There goes the young divil into Maggie Brown's, after his mug o' small beer, I'll be afther wagerin'. He's taken to the tumbler airly, like his poor father."

Ravenel's eye fell upon the boy just as she spoke, as he entered the pie-shop of the cartman's widow, where we have before seen Spinker go.

"Is that your boy?" he asked, as if with indifference.

"Yes; an' if ye want an arrand done, he's the boy to do it; but ye'll give me half the pay, or I'll never see a vinny o' it."

"There it is, ma'am," answered Ravenel, as he placed half a dollar in her hand. "I wish to send him to the upper part of the city; and it's worth a dollar; and I'll pay him the other half."

"He'll go for that, an' less. Give me the three quarthers, an him the quarther."

Ravenel did not hesitate to comply; and then with praises upon his head for his liberality, from her fluent Irish tongue, he hastened down the alley, and entered the wretched shop.

As his mother had said, the boy was in the act of turning off a half a pint of small beer.

"Is your name Billy?" asked Ravenel, at once coming to the business.

"Yes, sir," answered the freckled-faced, impudent-eyed urchin. "I'm Billy whin I've got empty pockets; but I'm William, or Misther William, if ye plaze, whin I've got the rhino."

And here he pulled out an old leather purse, and displayed a large amount of silver and small bills. See there, sir. Call me William."

"Where on earth, Billy," asked the widow, "did you get all that money? There must be twenty dollars full."

"Don't call me Billy, old woman. I got it by goin' errands. I keep a savin'-bank."

"Never a savin'-bank got near you, boy," said the woman. "I don't believe you came by it honestly."

"I gets my money as honest's you do, thank you. Don't I know a thing or two? How much does Mister Spinker give you for hot water, to open—"

"Hist, boy! Hush, lad!" And she glanced warningly at Ravenel, who stood quietly in the door. "What do you wish, sir?" she then asked. "Can I wait on you?"

"I came in to ask this youth, William, to go an errand. His mother, up at the corner, said he could go for me."

"I guess I don't ask the old 'oman," answered the boy, insolently. "I'm my own man. But I'm above errands. Think a fellar that has so much cash has to work?" he demanded, shaking his purse toward Ravenel.

"Perhaps," he said, smiling, "if I should pay you well, you might go."

"Never walk over a dime because you have a dollar in your hand," said the dame, sententiously. "Go for the gentleman, lad."

"Well, what'll you give, and where is it?"

"It is to Fourteenth Street, near Fifth Avenue—"

"Whew! away up among the big-bugs! I'll have to hire a silver mounted buggy, and a boy to drive. It'll cost me a ten to buy a new suit, and curl my hair, to go up there. What'll you give me?"

"A dollar."

"Done! if you add omnibus fare both ways."

"I agree to it! Now, what is your want?"

"To go with me to a book-store, where I have a parcel of two books which I wish you to take to a house, the number of which will be written on it. If you do your errand faithfully, you shall have another quarter."

"Good! Take a glass o' beer, sir? The old woman's beer is better than herself; for she is sour, and it isn't."

"Bill, you unhung!" and the boy's head dodged in time to save his ears from a sharp box.

As he was running out, she beckoned to him, and he came slowly toward her suspiciously.

"Don't fear, Billy; I won't touch you; but I have a word to whisper to you."

"What is it?" and he drew near to her.

"Be careful how you use Mr Spinker's name, as you did just now. You'll get me and yourself, too, into trouble; for I know very well Spinker gave you that money for doing his work."

"That he didn't."

"Didn't I see you and him talking together? And didn't you tell me yesterday you had been going an errand for Spinker?"

"Well, wot of it?"

"I know what his errands are! You need not try to pull wool over my eyes. If Spinker didn't give you that money, you stole it! I'll keep your secret, and you must keep mine! If this here gentleman had been a p'lice officer, and by-and-by anything 'bout Spinker should turn up, he'd recollect what he heard here, and have us both up! Keep dark!"

"And you, too, old aunty!" answered the boy, who looked a little disconcerted; and before going out, he took a long and scrutinizing look at Ravenel, and came to this conclusion:

"He's no p'liceman, 'coz he's got too white hands, and has such a tip-top air. I guess he's a gentleman, for all his rough clothes."

As Ravenel reached the street, he took careful note of the shop, as if to carry it and its number away in his mind; and then walking onward, was followed by the boy. As they passed the apple stand, his mother said:

"Now, avourneen, don't play idle, an' give the gentleman trouble. Do your arrant quick, and whin ye come back, I'll go into Misthress Maggie's and dhrink a small thim'bleful o' gin to your cup o' small beer."

"Don't be advisin' one older than yourself, old 'oman," answered Billy, as he went by. "I cut my eye-teeth afore you was born."

And he struck his hand against his pocket until his money rung again.

Ravenel entered the first store he came to on Broadway, and purchasing, without particular selection (since they were but baits for his hook) a couple of books, he had them tied up, and directed to his sister, giving the number of his house.

"Now, my boy, take this package safely. Ask for Miss Ravenel, and place it in her own hand. Here is sixty cents, the half you are to have. I will pay you the other half when I get home, as I shall reach there not long after you."

"Now, look a here! Do you keep back the other half 'coz you doubt my honour?"

"Not in the least! But I never pay full price till the article is safely delivered."

"Then as it is not personal, I'll not take offence. As I have plenty of money, I do this errand to oblige you."

"So I understand it."

"I al'ays likes gentlemen to understand me."

"It is no doubt very agreeable."

"If I must wait for you, then, I hope you'll not keep a fellow waitin' long; for time is money with married men, like me."

Thus saying, this juvenile embodiment of impudence and brass placed the parcel under his arm, and hailing an omnibus with an air, disappeared within its crowded interior.

"I think now I have snared one party toward establishing the truth of Wyndham's stories, and without exciting his suspicions; for I have been as wary as a detective, careful not to ask a question that might lead him to suspect I ever heard of Spinker or of Wyndham. The chief of police would give me

credit for my tact," he added, smiling. "Now my next task is to see this gentleman in person."

Proceeding at once to the bureau of police, Ravenel sent in his card, with the name of the street and number of his residence, and added, with a pencil:

"An interview upon an important matter is desired without delay."

Upon entering the apartment of the police chief, the latter received him with a keen, searching look (as if habitual to one who suspects all men, and has to do with the most evil), and then offered him a chair.

"Pardon me, sir; I have no time to remain. I can state briefly my business with you."

When the captain had heard the statement of Ravenel, of his suspicions of the boy Billy, telling him all he knew, he answered, promptly:

"I am interested, sir, in this matter; for I have seen Wyndham in his cell, and I said, if that young man, with his face, is guilty, then I shall place less faith in physiognomies; for, sir, I read men by their faces! I read your card, sir, not quicker than I read your face!"

"I am very glad that I am not ashamed, sir, to have it read," answered Ravenel. "I am glad you are prepossessed in favour of Wyndham."

"I will go, now. Will you call a hack?" he said to a constable, who was at the door. "You are not afraid to be seen riding with a police-officer, Mr Ravenel."

"No, sir. But I should rather not be seen by certain parties, or even by the boy, with you, as it might defeat my objects for the future."

"True—I will go alone!"

Half an hour afterward Ravenel reached home.

"Has any one been here with a package?" he asked of the servant in the hall.

"Yes, sir—a half-grown Irish boy won't go until you come, and says you owe him for bringing the books."

"I do. Where is he?"

"Waiting in the kitchen. But the cook keeps her eye on him."

"Send him to my study." He then hastened to this room, set ajar a door leading into the adjoining breakfast-room, and then gave the following order to his footmen:

"If a stout gentleman rings, show him into the drawing-room, and come at once to me. Ah! so you are here, Billy," said Ravenel, who had resumed his ordinary attire, which was that of a man of fashion.

The boy stared at him, and looked about, and then, as if overawed by the splendour of the apartment, said:

"I guessed you was a rich cove, but didn't spect nothin' like this. Hope you'll not mind my imp'ence, sir; but when a gemman don't dress like a gemman, how is a poor lad to know 'im? Hope no offence, sir. Brought your bundle."

"I see you did."

"Tried to make the flunkey pay the other sixty cents, but he wouldn't take my word you owed it, and so I had to wait. The young lady would have paid it, but she hadn't only gold, a state of things I'd like to have to happen to me. Now, sir, if you'll fork over the balance, I'll be goin'; for I've 'gaged with a set o' boys to go over to Hoboken to have some fun."

"Well, I fear I shall have to detain you till I send

out for some change. In the meantime, look at these pictures."

The watchful ears of Ravenel now caught the sound of the bell; and in a moment afterward he was in the drawing-room with the chief of police, whose respect at finding Ravenel the proprietor of so rich a house was evidently increased for him; for, in spite of reason and philosophy we are influenced by externals! and a man even respects himself more when dressed up in a new suit than in his ordinary clothes, and expects additional regard from others.

"I will place you here, sir," said Ravenel. "This door I have left purposely ajar. You can hear every word. I shall be able to draw it all out of him, as he can suspect nothing, while we evidently would lock up his mouth if you were to question him."

"Your course is an excellent one, Mr Ravenel. I will wait here until it is time for me to appear on the scene."

When Ravenel re-entered his study by another way, he found Billy standing in wonder over a Laocoon.

"That snake 'll get the best of that fellow and his children. Whew! I wouldn't like to be in that bigger chap's place. Well, sir, I believe I'll go."

"Sit down, William; I want to talk with you about business. How would you like a good place to work for wages?"

"Shall I sit down on this 'ere velvety thing?"

"Yes; if you like."

"Don't want reg'lar wages, sir," he answered, as he carefully sat down upon the *fauteuil*. "Likes freedom. Likes going arrands. Has then all my time to myself. I likes independence, I does."

"Do you make money going on errands?"

"Sometimes, if I get a good fellow who don't mind payin' flush up. Now and then comes along a haul."

"Yes, I suppose so. You, no doubt, charge according to the value of what you carry?"

"Yes, if as how I knows it."

"Suppose that the parcel I sent you with, instead of being two books worth ten dollars, had been a package of bank-notes, value three thousand, and you knew it?"

"I reckon you'd had to bleed a little," answered Billy, with an indescribable look of shrewdness.

"I dare say I ought to give you five for such——"

"Or a cool ten!" the boy said, sharply.

"Perhaps so. Now, suppose it had been an errand to a bank? Supposing I had asked you to take a check to some bank to get discounted—say of a thousand dollars?"

The boy looked up quickly, and then said:

"Depends where the bank is—how far off!"

"Say, the—the — bank!"—(naming the very bank where Wyndham had got the check taken from the letter cashed, giving the proceeds to Billy.)

"How big a check?"

"For a thousand dollars!"

"Well, it ought to be worth twenty!"

"If you go on such errands often, and are paid your prices, you ought to grow rich."

"Don't get 'em often, though."

"I thought the postmaster often sent you on such errands!"

The boy started, and looked sharply at the face of Mr Ravenel, and then said:

"Who told you so?"

"Why, it's no secret. Mr Wyndham, who is my friend."

"Wyndham! That's the man as is in limbo for opening letters!"

"The same. He told me you had brought him a check or checks from the postmaster, for him to get cashed for you. This shows you are a boy to be trusted, doesn't it?"

This last timely flattery killed the first life of suspicion in Billy's mind, if any had been created by the words above spoken; and he answered, with confident vanity:

"Guess I am! Who said I was a thief? I'm the honestest boy in all York. Try me, Mister. So you know Mr Wyndham?"

"Oh, yes! and I am very sorry he is in trouble. You know that you gave him the check that he got cashed?"

The boy coloured, and looked alarmed; but the calm, steady eyes of Ravenel seemed to transfix him.

"Well, wot of it? Didn't the colonel give it to me?"

"The colonel denies it. He says you never went any such errand for him."

"He does, does he?"

"In a letter I have to-day received from him. Now, my lad, it will be safest for you to make a clean breast of it, and tell me who employed you to ask Mr Wyndham to go to the bank with you?"

"I want to know if you got me up here to put them are questions to me?" he asked, sulkily.

"To tell you the truth, yes! Wyndham is in prison

for getting the money on the check you gave him, as one charge against him. The postmaster did not send you to him. Who did?"

The boy felt that he was in a dangerous position. He felt he must either betray Spinker, or be taken to prison.

"What'll you give me if I'll tell?"

"Ten dollars!"

"It's worth twenty!"

"Twenty, then!"

"Put the money in my hand."

"There it is!"

"Good! It was Mr Spinker!"

"The other clerk?"

"Yes!"

"Did he give you the check?"

"Didn't I just say so? Now let me go."

"To whom did you give the money after it was cashed by Mr Wyndham?"

"To Spinker!"

"All of it?"

"All but a little I kept back for myself, knowing he wouldn't dare to ask me for it."

"One more question."

"I guess I've answered for the money you gave me. Another five, and I'll answer it."

"Answer the question first."

"Not a 'nary word."

"There's a five-dollar gold piece," said Ravenel, resolved not to let any light matter keep him from getting at the whole truth. The boy weighed the gold upon the end of his fore-finger, and then, as if satisfied of its genuineness, said: "Now the question?"

"Who endorsed the paper when you went back with it from the bank?"

"Will I be hanged if I tell?"

"Not for telling. No."

"Spinker did. I took it to him, instead of to the old colonel, and told him the bank would not pay the money on it to Mr Wyndham without it was 'dorsed; and he writ the colonel's name on it."

"Did you see him do it?"

"Yes; and held the inkstand to him to wet his pen in. Then I takes it back, and Mr Wyndham thought 'twas all right."

"That will do," said Ravenel, with a feeling of great relief, while his face lighted up with joy. "Come in, sir."

The door opened, and the captain of police appeared in the room, saying to Ravenel:

"A plain case, sir. Adroitly managed. Come, my little fellow, you must go along with me."

As every rogue of a boy in New York is familiar with the person of the chief of police, no sooner did Billy behold him than, conscious of his deserts, he made a bolt past him, dodged beneath the table, rose beyond, and, doubling like a hare, escaped through the open door into the breakfast-room. When Ravenel in pursuit reached it, he was vanishing through the window opening upon the rear balcony. In a moment, he had descended amid the trellised vines, leaped to the area, and, climbing a fence, disappeared to the other street, and fairly got away from his pursuers.

CHAPTER XV.

"Now, the first thing that young vagabond will do," said the chief of police, as he returned to the room he had left, feeling that pursuit would be useless, "will be to run to Spinker and give him warning."

"I hardly think he cares enough for him," answered Ravenel. "We had best have Spinker arrested before he can elude us."

"There must be no delay. Do you know where he lives?"

"At the Carlton. The fellow has had the impertinence to send me a challenge, which I made up my mind to answer favourably, in order to keep my man in my eye, and know where to find him when I wanted him; for I expected to ascertain that he was the man who had brought all this evil on Wyndham. But I will anticipate my visit to Spinker, and you shall be my second. At this hour he will be at his rooms, as he will be dressing for dinner."

"Come, then, sir, ride with me. I do not know him in person, and you do."

"I will go with pleasure. I desire to see him arrested."

"After securing the principal, I shall ferret out the boy easily."

Mr Spinker was in his room. He had feigned illness, and sent word to the post office that he could not come that day. The truth was, he felt lest he could not keep his face looking innocent if he heard them talking about Wyndham's arrest. He feared, too, that he was suspected. Moreover, he wished to arrange his belligerent affairs with Mr Ravenel. He

had not yet received the report of his second, the cavalry officer. This warlike gentleman had found on the way back too much good company to tempt him to linger and talk over the great duel to come off (as he hoped it would yet). But Spinker was not alone. About five minutes before we intrude upon him, and while he is engaged in loading a preposterously long pistol, ramming down the wadding before the powder, a solid body strikes against his door which fairly bursts open by the force of the projectile, and head and shoulders first, Billy pitches into the middle of the room. He regained his feet, while Spinker stood petrified with fear and amazement.

"What on earth is the matter, you confounded little devil, to scare a man in this way, and a half-loaded pistol in his hand? What do you mean, sirrah? If you've come to take my clothes to your mother to wash, this ain't Monday."

"I come to tell you, Spinker, it's all out."

"What's all out?" asked the man, turning deadly pale; for a guilty man always has something he is afraid will come out.

"Give me a twenty-dollar gold piece, and I'll tell you," answered Billy, breathing hard, and panting like a dog which had run fast and far; for he had run direct to the Carlton from Fourteenth Street without taking breath—not from love of Spinker, but from avarice, which was the ruling passion of his vicious nature. He meant to make the most of his secret.

"Is it about me?"

"I guess it is. You'd better shell out, or I'll be off; for they'll be here next, and I don't want my cake dough."

"What is the matter?" he asked, tremblingly.

"The check, you know. That one you told me to give Mr Wyndham, and which you forged the old man's name to."

"What of it?" asked Spinker, in a husky voice.

"Not another word, unless you pay me for my news," said the boy, stoutly; "and you had best be in a hurry, for 'taint safe for me to be here long."

"There is a twenty-dollar bill."

"Are you sure it ain't counterfeit?"

"It is good. Don't you see the bank? It is one I got on the check. Now, what is it you have to tell me? out with it, quick!"

"That it's all out about you and the check. They know it was you forged the name and gave the check to me to give to Wyndham."

"Who knows?"

"The perlice cap'n."

"The chief of police?"

"Yes. He was after me; but I got away from him, and run right here to tell you to take care of yourself. Don't you see I can hardly talk now, for want of breath? I came down here at 2-40, and won the stakes!" and here he fluttered the twenty-dollar bill in the air. "Now I advise you, old fellow, to make yourself as small as you can, and if you can whittle yourself down to the little end of nothing, you'd best do it; for if the old fat police chap sets eyes on you, you are gone. It's all up! If they catch you, they'll let Wyndham out, and put you in."

"What shall I do? Where shall I go? In what place shall I hide?" cried Spinker, in the utmost alarm, running hither and thither about his chamber, now

picking up his hat and throwing it down to take his overcoat, and dropping that to take his umbrella, being perfectly beside himself with fear.

"Good-bye, Spinker, I'm off," said Billy, going to the door. "Hope you'll get away safe."

"Where—where are you going, boy? Let me go with you, Billy."

"I am going to mother's old den. There's a place there I can hide, where the old boy himself couldn't find me."

"Where does your mother live?"

"In an alley out of Centre Street."

"Oh, I wish it was dark, so nobody could see me. But I'll put on this old dirty linen coat and slouched hat, to make me look like some poor devil. Stay, let me rough out my hair, and look like a labourer or something. I'm afraid they are downstairs even now. Go and look, Billy, and see if the coast is clear."

"Another cooler."

"What?"

"Another twenty."

"There it is. Now run."

In a moment the boy returned, saying that he could see no enemy. Spinker having made himself look as rough in apparel and looks as he could, and thereby running the risk of being taken for a bold bandit, hastily followed the boy, his hat drawn down over his eyes. They reached the side street by the way of the area, and moved rapidly along toward the home of the apple woman.

After threading a portion of the vile purlieus about the Five Points, and passing almost under the shadow of the Tombs—the sight of which made Spinker

shudder—they darted into a narrow, filthy alley, crowded with slattern women, dirty children, dabbling in the mud of the gutter, and laden with an atmosphere poisoned with the worst smells that can be generated among the wretched and noisome abodes of the offscouring of society. Passing swiftly among a crowd of slattern white women, tipsy men, and foul negroes of both sexes, a perfect pandemonium on the threshold of hell, Spinker and his guide at length reached a tumble-down rookery of a house, old, weather-stained, and thronged with occupants, which filled with their heads every door and window; for a fight had just sprung up on the street, almost the only pastime for the amusement of the occupants of these dens of vice and misery.

A sort of stoop covered the descent to a cellar door, which Billy dodged, followed by Spinker, in great disgust, but enduring all, in hopes of safety. The subterranean room, dark and scarcely habitable, contained several human beings. In one corner lay some wretch, emaciated and dying, as his hollow eyes with the death glare on them betrayed. In another, a dead woman, in rags that scarcely hid her skeleton-like limbs, lay upon an old mat, with a babe clinging to her breast, vainly seeking nourishment. This was a season when ship fever was prevailing among the vilest and worst ventilated parts of the city, and it was not unusual for the police to find a corpse in every house each morning along this street.

In the middle of this apartment, by the faint light which came down the cellar door, two fellows, a white man and a burly negro, were gambling at cards, with great oaths and mutual curses. By the side of the

cellar stairs lay three poor little dirty children in drunken sleep, their mother having given to them rum, that she might keep them quiet while she went to a dance house on the other side of the way.

Spinker saw all this scene at a glance, and half resolved to retreat.

"Is it here your mother lives?"

"Come on," was Billy's only answer. And opening a door in the rear, he entered a small room, like a closet, lighted by a little window covered with dirt, opening on a side alley, which was only three feet wide. In this hole was a cot bed and a chair, and some attempt to make things look comfortable.

"Here's where I live. Mother sleeps on that bed and I sleeps under it, when I'm home o' nights."

"And is this the miserable den where I am to hide? Besides, it is not safe, if any police should chance to come in."

"What would you give to find a place where you would be as safe as a nut?"

"Won't you do nothing without bribes? You'll rob me, you villain," cried Spinker, in a sort of despair.

"You've got plenty of cash. I mean to get what I can, as I helped you to it. So don't be mealy mouthed."

"Where is the place?"

"I won't show you, old fellow, without the money down—a twenty."

With a groan, Spinker drew from his pocket-book another bank note. Billy then pulled away two low boards from the back of the room, and revealed a cavity as dark as the black hole of Calcutta.

"What a dreadful place. I should suffocate there," cried Spinker.

"I'll show you the hang of it. Don't you see it used to be a coal-hole. Look up there in the pavement. That's the round iron cover to the place they used to throw down the coal through. Now, with this broom handle I can give it a turn round and let in air and daylight, and, what is more, if you stan' up on this 'ere barrel, you can lift it off with your hands, and can climb out if the pollis are after you."

"And where does it come out at?" asked Spinker, brightening a little.

"Into a coal shed, back o' the houses on the other lane. It's the completest hidin' place in York; for if the pollis come in front, and find this hole, why, give a chap half a minute's notice, and he's out on the other side o' the alley, and dodging here and there among the old buildings; nothing could follow him but a snake as could wind in and out as fast as he did. Now my advice to you is—"

"Well, what?" demanded Spinker, gloomily and impatiently.

"To stay quietly in the old woman's room till night, as I mean to; for they are after me, you see, as well as you. When mother comes, I'll give her a twenty, and she'll take care of both of us and feed us, though she don't often take boarders. But if you'll pay two dollars a day for board and lodging, she'll keep you as long as you'll stay."

"Two dollars!"

"Well, then, for the room. That is worth two dollars."

"You mean that I must pay for safety."

"Yes; nothing to be had in this yearth without payin' for it. Now, keep quiet and amuse yourself,

and you are safe. I'll just step out and look about, and see if there is any danger, and let you know."

"Do, Billy."

When the boy left him in the wretched closet which the apple-woman called her home, Spinker sat down on the edge of the cot, and began to reflect, and soliloquised as follows:

"What a wretched hole! How long will I have to stay here? What if this young vagabond has only made this alarm to get money out of me; and there is nothing in his story about the police being after me? What if he should betray me while I am here? The infamous little wretch will do anything for money—hang his own mother! What will they think at the Carlton at my leaving so sudden? Thank heaven I have all my money with me. To-night, I mean to buy the disguise of a sailor, and escape on board of a vessel. They will be sure to hang me for the forgery if I am taken; for this boy can prove it on me. I wish I could kill the young scamp safely, and put him out of the way! A good idea. He is the only witness. Good! I will strangle him when he comes back, and throw his body into the coal-hole! Nobody would ever know who did it. I could then escape at night by the trap-door and reach the docks, buying sailor's clothes in Chatham Street on my way. It is a desperate deed! But if he is out of the way, no one can criminate me."

He became silent, and deliberated on the murder he intended should be done. Not a feeling of remorse or regret for his crimes troubled him. He had no thought but for himself and his present safety.

In the meanwhile, Billy had crept out into the outer

apartment where the two men were playing cards. He had so smutted his face in the coal-hole that Spinker would not have recognized him; and, moreover, he had flung across his shoulder an old charcoal bag.

He came near the white man who was playing, and, touching him, said:

"Blink, I've got a game for you."

"Who are you?" asked the man, savagely.

"Billy."

"You look like a devil's imp."

"Looks is nothin'. Quit that and come with me here in the corner. I've got a haul for you."

"That's my boy," said the man. "Darkey, let's drop the game. I'm tired."

"So is I," answered the savage-looking negro; "'coz I wants a part o' the haul too. Tink I no hear you. If you don't let me in, too, I'll blab."

"Let him in, Blink. You are not so strong as the man you've got to rob, and it'll take two to hold him while I get at his money. He's got most a thousand, if he hain't spent a good deal of it. He stole it, and it's fair stealing it again. Come here in the corner, and I'll tell you about it, and what I want you to do."

The three crouched in the corner, where lay the corpse of the man who was dying when Billy and Spinker came in. Blink, a small, gray-eyed, vicious-visaged man, on whose features sin and crime had written their dark lines in ineffaceable characters, seated himself on the legs of the still warm body, while the negro crouched with his back against the wall. Kneeling on one knee, Billy then briefly told them the history of Spinker, who was hiding from the

police with all the money taken from letters in the post office on his person, and that if they would help him rob him, they should share a third each.

This bargain was agreed to. It was also agreed that he was not to be hurt, only robbed, and then left. Thus, while Spinker was plotting the murder of his tool, the latter was conspiring with two of the most desperate wretches in the town to rob him of all his ill-gotten gains.

At length, Spinker having made up his mind—and a desperate and murderously resolute mind it necessarily was in his circumstances—to slay the only witness of his forgery, he proceeded to examine the coal-hole and test the trap, to see if it would slide easily. He was aided in this investigation by the aid of lucifer matches, which, being a great smoker, he always carried about with him for lighting his cigars. It required the burning of all the matches his box contained before the desolateness and safety of his retreat were fully revealed. He then went into the apple-widow's room, and sat upon the bed, a prey to miserable thoughts. He began to regret he had ever opened a letter—called himself a fool for yielding to the temptation—reflected upon himself for not considering that sooner or later he must be found out. In fact, he heartily repented of all his misdoings, and wished he had never done the things which had driven him to such desperate steps for shelter. But his repentance was purely selfish. He was sorry for what he had done evil because it had brought him into trouble and menaced his liberty, if not his life. He did not sorrow because he had offended the great laws of God and man, and sinned against truth and right. He made no con-

fession to his Creator—no resolves of amendment of life. His repentance was nothing more than sorrow that his crimes had got himself into trouble. No doubt, if he had been that night brought to a bed of sickness, and had sent for a minister of the Gospel, he would have said that he was a truly penitent man, and was sorry for all he had done; while his contrition would have been merely personal regret for the results upon himself, and would not have been worth a farthing beyond the grave. Such is the nature of the repentance of four-fifths of the criminals who die on the gallows. Their penitence consists in being very sorry that they have been found out; and they readily promise the priest not to offend again, because they know very well they can have no opportunity of repeating their evil deeds. But if, by chance, such a man is reprieved after all his fallacious penitence, no sooner does a good occasion offer, than he yields, and plunges into his old offences. Deathbed repentances, either on the gallows or on pillows, are of little value, inasmuch as they are born of fear, or of regret for the personal inconvenience into which crime has brought the confessee. Now, in Spinker's repentance there was not one grain of godliness, but there was a full pound avoirdupois of Spinker.

While thus reflecting upon his prospects, there came all of a sudden a light into the room. It was the opening of the door, caused by the entrance of Billy. He had come in before-hand, intending to give his confreres the signal in good time.

"Well, Billy? Is all clear?"

"Yes."

"I wish it was dark. I want to get out of this. I

think, if it was night, I could either get aboard a ship or get a skiff and cross over to the Jersey shore Anywhere but here. But do you know, Billy, I have been thinking you have been playing a game on me and that the police don't know nothing."

"I swear like Satan they is. It's got out somehow but no matter how, you are bein' after, and are safe here. How much money have you got?"

"You little son of darkness! do you mean to get out of me all? I haven't but a few hundreds. I have honourably paid all my bills, even my tailor's, and at the hotel, and my washerwoman's. I don't think I've got four hundred left."

"S'pose we count it?"

"No, no. There is no doubt I'm sought after?"

"Not a bit."

"Suppose I am taken, no one can prove anything against me."

"I can."

"But you won't?"

"Give me a cool hundred, and I'll be mum."

"There it is," answered Spinker, reaching his hand toward him, as if it held a bill.

As the boy reached forward eagerly to take it, the hand clinched him by the throat; and, with the strength of murderous resolve, threw him backward. The boy struggled with hands and feet, fearfully gurgling out horrible sounds from his throat. Less and less violent his struggles became, fainter and fainter his inarticulate moans. Two hands were now applied instead of one, and soon a profound silence (all but the quick breath of the murderer) followed.

"I believe he's dead. He don't move. I hope he's

dead. What a horrible thing to kill a person, even a boy. But his word might have hanged me. Self-preservation is a law. He stirs. There, there. That pressure, I am sure, has silenced him. How dreadful. His heart don't beat. His pulse is stilled. He's quiet enough now."

Spinker bent over the body of the boy. He felt satisfied in his own mind that he must be dead.

"I am now safe. They can never get his testimony. Now I will take back the money he has robbed me of by his vile avarice."

He then proceeded to rifle the still warm body, and took from it not only all the bills he had given him, but all his other money that he had. He then drew the inanimate form to the remotest corner of the coal-hole, and sat down once more upon the bed, resolved, as soon as it grew dark, to escape from a place now become still more dreadful to him. Every few minutes he would mutter to himself:

"I had to do it. I am now safe, anyhow. Dead men tell no tales. Even if I should be taken, they could prove nothing."

CHAPTER XVI.

In the meanwhile, the chief of police and Ravenel had reached the Carlton House. Without giving any previous warning, they proceeded, guided by the gentlemanly proprietor, Mr Preston, to Room 112. It was vacant, of course; but the signs of disorder showed that it had been but recently left. The waiter asserted that, half an hour before, Mr Spinker had rung for hot water. Another waiter said he had

seen a ragamuffin boy, who sometimes came for his washing, go into his room not twenty minutes before.

"Describe the boy," said the police chief.

At the accurate portraiture of Billy given by the servant, this gentleman and Ravenel exchanged glances of intelligence.

"As I feared," said the chief. "He has given him warning; for there's friendship even among rogues; and the bird has flown."

"We are then at fault," said Ravenel, with a look of disappointment.

"No; come with me, Mr Ravenel, to my office. I have men who can ferret out anything."

On reaching the police-office, the chief called one of his men—a small, shrewd, quiet fellow, and said:

"There is an Irish apple-woman at the corner by the post office. Have you seen her?"

"Yes."

"She has a boy, Billy."

"I know him—the greatest scamp in the city."

"I want you to find him. He has concealed himself somewhere. He is an important witness and must be found."

"He will be likely to be at his mother's. I will find him, however; for such boys," he added, facetiously, "like hens, only have certain places to lay, and are sure to be found at one or the other."

"Will you take me with you?" asked Ravenel.

"You are too much of a gentleman, sir, to go in such places. You would attract too much attention; have your pocket picked, or your hat knocked off, and so give me trouble."

"I will wear a policeman's overcoat and hat."

The detective glanced at his chief, and receiving an affirmative nod, soon inserted Ravenel in a coarse suit of apparel, and the two left in company. The anxiety of Ravenel, for Wyndham's sake, to see that the boy was arrested, prompted him to offer to go with the officer.

At length they reached the foul lane and precincts where the den lay which Billy called his home. How it was that the officer knew her abode is no doubt surprising; but as it is the business of such officials to collect information constantly, and often without aim (for the most ordinary remark may prove of value), there was not a pedlar, or fruit-seller, or suspicious vagabond he did not know the abode or haunt of. As for the apple-woman, he knew her well, as he frequently took his station by the post office, to watch persons going in or out, looking for some person he wished to arrest; and he learned from her her abode.

As soon as he reached the cellar, he descended quickly, before any one could go ahead of him to give the alarm. Ravenel started at the sight of the dead man in one corner, and of the dead mother and dying babe in the other. The two gamblers were not there. We will now explain what has become of them.

It had been Billy's intention, after getting more bribes out of Spinker, to give the signal for his companions to rush in. This signal was a shrill and peculiar whistle, to be made with two fingers thrust into the cheek. But the gripe of the hands of Spinker had silenced the young betrayer of his principal, and the men waited for the sign until they grew impatient.

"Come, let's dash in," said the man called Blink, "we've waited long enough."

"I tink we hab. So let's go in," answered the thick-lipped negro.

Blink opened the door, and both sprang in, closing it behind them. They looked for Billy; but not seeing their confederate, but Spinker alone, seated gloomily upon the cot, Blink called out, while Spinker started with fear and terror at their sudden apparition and demoniac countenances.

"Ho, Billy, where be ye? Is this our man?"

"What do you want here?" cried Spinker, with his heart in his throat.

"Where's Billy?"

"Gone."

"Then we'll take half and half," said the man, as he levelled a blow at Spinker's eyes. He parried it with his wrist, and cried: "Oh, don't kill me; don't kill me; I've got money. I'll pay you for my life!"

The negro now caught him by both arms, and drew them behind his back, and tied them; while Blink, with the celerity of a well-trained pickpocket, soon had possession of his pocket-book crammed with bank notes, of his wallet, handkerchief, and jewellery—even taking the rings from his fingers."

All the while the wretched Spinker was groaning with mortal fear, and imploring mercy.

"Oh, save my life. Do not rob me of everything. Murder."

The negro, grasping him round the body, placed his big hand upon his mouth with an oath, and stopped his cries.

"Well, here's a haul. Billy was right," said Blink with exultation. "Now, man, you may thank us, for the constables would have robbed you when they took

you; but we only take your money. Tie his mouth, Darkey."

They took off his cravat, and gagging him, left him lying on the floor in a pitiable condition, his hands also bound behind his back, and hastened out to divide their spoils—their faces shining with fierce joy at the great amount of money they had obtained; while, in their success, Billy, the cause of all, was quite forgotten. But this is only an epitome of the way of the world in the hands of human nature. We use Artesian wells, and forget to honour Artes, where they originated. We make use of the telegraph, but never think of Morse. We ride on the railroad, but cannot tell who first taught the human race to make forty miles an hour with an iron horse. We travel on the steamers, but are oblivious of Fulton; and use the steel pen, but forget the inventor. We are always standing in other men's shoes, and benefiting by other men's genius, wit, invention, and works, and we do not stop to give their memories even a "benison." It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that these two sons of sin should, in rejoicing over their treasure, forget Billy, who had been the means of placing it in their possession. It is by the pyramid of the dead bodies of his comrades that the successful soldier reaches the top of the wall, and plants his standard on its battlements.

The reader will no doubt regret, if he is in sympathy with Ravenel and his imprisoned friend Wyndham, that these rogues, in black and white, had taken from the person of the miserable Spinker all the bank-notes which, if found upon him, might have convicted him—as the notes of which he was robbed were the same delivered to

Wyndham by the paying-teller at the bank. But it is no more true of true love, that its course never runs smooth, than of vice. Its turbid current is ever tumultuous; and while in the centre it seems to flow bravely toward the ocean of success, on either side of it ascends an eddy bringing back its waters to their head.

As Blink and his accomplice, whom he called Darkey, opened the door to depart with their booty, they came face to face with the policeman and Ravenel, who were just about to enter the apple-woman's den.

Quicker than the movement which Blink made to get away on recognizing the detective was that of the officer, who grasped him by the collar, and tripping him up, (for your detective practices, privately, wrestling, boxing, and other arts that will avail him), laid him upon the ground upon his back. The negro, more powerful, and warned by the fate of his accomplice, dashed past Ravenel, who had no desire to detain him, not having any motive, and so escaped to the street. But the money was all in the possession of the man on whom the officer stood with his foot upon his breast.

"So I have you at last, my cove-duck," he said to Blink. "It is a lucky hour. Will you, sir, help me to secure this fellow. He is one of the worst gang in the city, little as he is."

As he spoke, he drew from the capacious pocket of his heavy coat a pair of irons, with which, besides arms, this officer always went provided. In a minute's time, the prisoner, in spite of his struggles, was securely ironed. In the scuffle, a roll of the bills he

had robbed Spinker of, which he held in his hand, fell to the floor. Ravenel picked them up, and showing them to the officer, said:

"These are on the very same bank where Wyndham got the check cashed."

"That is lucky. It may have something to do with our affair," replied the detective.

He then opened the door into the small room, to see if he could discover anything more. The room was vacant. Spinker, hearing the noise without, had, by great exertions, disengaged his hands, and then removed the gag from his mouth. As the confusion increased, he felt sure that the officers were after him (he would have felt the snare were they not, for guilt suspects every noise), and making his way through the opening made by the removal of the loose boards, he turned to replace them, but in his fright and haste he could not do so effectually. His purpose was to escape by the coal-trap over his head. He could not reach it, and in the darkness he was not able to see the barrel on which Billy had stood when he desired to make his egress by that way. But his foot touched the body of the boy. At first, he recoiled with a shudder; but despair grasps at all aids. He lacked but three inches of reaching the scuttle-hole. He could stand on the body and gain his end. The noise without grew more alarming. He fancied he heard his name called; but it was only fancy; but guilt hears and sees all sorts of demons and voices and sounds. He drew the body so that it lay directly under the trap. He raised himself upon it, and began to move aside the iron cover to the coal trap.

While thus engaged, with perspiration covering his

brow with great beads, and his heart throbbing with fear, he heard persons in the widow's room. He heard their voices. One voice said:

"There is no one here."

Another said:

"He must be found, if there is any hiding place."

He knew this last voice to be Mr Guy Ravenel's. He was now seized with a new terror. He thought he had come to put him to death for challenging him; for he had no knowledge of the deep interest he took in his victim, Wallace Wyndham.

The detective also spoke again, and he recognized the voice this second time; for he had been present when the officer, a month previous, had arrested a person at the post office window, while taking out a decoy-letter.

His efforts now became dreadfully desperate to raise himself to the opening by drawing up his body. He had revolved the circular cover to the opening, so that all that was necessary was for him to rise to it. But his strength was not sufficient for him to raise his weight. He exerted himself like a drowning man to get his head above water.

In the meanwhile, the practised eye of the officer had detected the loose planks, and at his touch they yielded, exposing the cavity. Lighting and thrusting in his dark lantern, he beheld the wretched Spinker hanging by his hands, vainly trying to draw himself up out of the pit.

"Is that your man?" asked the officer of Ravenel.

"Yes. It is Spinker, though I hardly recognize him," answered Ravenel, with joy mingled with surprise.

"Well, Mr Spinker, you may as well let go and drop down. I'll find an easier way for you to get out. You are my prisoner."

There came from the mouth of Spinker a loud cry, which it would be impossible to describe—it expressed such a combination of horror, rage, terror, and wretched despair.

Dropping upon the boy's body, he dashed frantically at a space between Ravenel and the detective, hoping to escape. But the strong hand of Ravenel laid hold upon him.

"Yield peaceably, Spinker, or you will be knocked down," said the officer. "You can't get away. I am in luck."

Spinker then fell upon his knees, and began in the most abject manner to appeal to him, pretending that it was on the duel affair he had sought him.

"O, sir, I repent sending the challenge. I am sorry I offended you. Let me go."

"Silence," answered Ravenel. "It is a more serious affair I come here upon."

"Hillo, what is this? Here is a dead body, or one as good as dead," cried the officer. "It is the boy."

By the aid of the lantern, Ravenel recognised Billy.

"How came this boy dead? for dead I believe he is!"

"I don't know. I found him here."

"We shall see to that. Didn't you say, sir," addressing Ravenel, "that this boy was an important witness?"

"A very important one against him."

"So, good. I see it. He has done the deed."

"Can it be possible, Spinker, you have killed the boy—added murder to all your other crimes?"

"What crimes, Ravenel?"

"Theft, forgery, and false-swearing against an innocent man."

"We will talk about this by-and-by, sir," said the officer; "I must now iron my man. I see he has done worse than forge. Here's work for the coroner, and by-and-by for the hangman."

"O, gentlemen, don't talk of hanging. I am an innocent man. This woman is my wash-woman. I came for my clothes—saw this boy here dying, and fearing to be suspected, I was just trying to leave by the trap when you came."

"We'll have all this proved in court, my man," answered the detective, securing the irons.

Upon going into the outside room, where the detective had left Blink in the custody of a policeman whom he had called in, the robber said to him, saucily:

"That money is mine. Give it up to me. I stole it from a thief."

"What thief?"

That trembling, scared devil you have in manacles. I heard from Billy as how he stole it from a bank, and so I robbed him."

"Did you take these bills from this person?" demanded Ravenel, eagerly.

"Yes."

"Mr Spinker ought to have his money, then," said the officer, dryly. "Is it true this fellow has robbed you?"

Spinker was too confused, and too desirous of getting his money back, to see the trap laid for him, and answered quickly:

"Yes, he and a negro fellow came and robbed me of several hundred dollars."

"Is this the money?" quietly asked the officer.

"Yes."

"Was your money on the —— Bank?"

"Yes." Not instantly, but too late, suspecting from the officer's manner, danger, he added, "No, not on that bank altogether. Some of it is on it."

"Very good. You shall have your money again. Take it."

Spinker, notwithstanding his peril, felt so strongly his love of money that he readily took the bills and pocketed them. The officer looked at Ravenel, who nodded his approval and satisfaction. The prisoner now pretended he was arrested for challenging Ravenel contrary to law, and began to revile the latter for obtaining his arrest, instead of fighting him like a gentleman.

"You will find that you are arrested on a more serious charge," answered the officer, as Ravenel maintained a contemptuous silence. "So come quietly along."

A constable had been sent for a hack, which soon received the whole party, and was driven off to the police office.

That night, Spinker passed in the guard-house, in a most wretched state of terror and despair. He had been committed there to await his examination on the charge of murder, forgery, robbery of letters, and false-swearing against Wyndham. The judge, on hearing all the evidence next morning, as given by the police chief, the detective, and Ravenel, asked Spinker if he could offer any defence to the accusations. Gathering courage from despair, the miserable man cried:

"You can't prove it. You can't prove I robbed letters. You can't prove I forged. You can't prove

I got the money on the check. You can't prove killed the boy."

"We will take the responsibility of the proof," answered the judge. "Officer, take the accused to prison to await his trial at the next term of the criminal court for murder and forgery; and if he is proved innocent of these, the Federal authorities will take him in charge on the accusation of robbing the post office."

The same night, the woman Auntie Maggie, on the formal complaint of Ravenel, was arrested and examined; and her testimony went to confirm the judge in the guilt of Spinker. It was, however, necessary to prove that he had forged the check, and which, as the justice properly said, could not easily be done "now that the boy Billy was dead."

Scarcely had he spoken when there was heard a noise of voices in the vestibule, and to the amazement of Ravenel, who was in court, the apple woman entered, hauling in her son, the boy believed to be dead.

"Here is my son, your honour. He said it was Spinker, the post office clerk, that choked him to death, as it like to ha' been, to kape him from bein' a witness; coz Billy knows more nor Spinker 'd like to have him tell, and we've come here to make our complaint against the murderous villain."

Billy gave in his testimony so clearly and fully, that the judge said he must detain him as a witness. With two such witnesses as the pie-woman Maggie, and Billy, the conviction of Spinker was only a question of time; and so convinced was the Recorder of the innocence of Wyndham, that he at once wrote out an order for his release, on a nominal bail readily offered

by Ravenel, who hastened to the prison with it, wishing to present it to Wyndham with his own hand.

"How is the prisoner?" he asked of the keeper, as he was admitted to the corridor.

"Cheerful. He has had a lady to visit him this morning. I reckon, a sister or some relation."

"Is she with him now?"

"No. She left half an hour ago. I lether out myself."

"No doubt his sister," said Ravenel to himself.

"How her heart will bound with joy to embrace her brother again free. What cell is this where the prisoner moans so?" he asked, as he passed a great window, from within which came sounds of grief and complaint.

"That is the young man who robbed the post office and forged a check, and they say committed a murder to put the only witness out of the way. His name is Spinks or Spinky, or some such name."

Upon entering, Ravenel exclaimed with joy: "Your innocence is established. You are free. But you must, by-and-by, appear in court to fasten the guilt upon Spinker at his trial, not as a criminal, but as a witness."

"O joy! joy!" cried a female voice.

And the person whom Ravenel supposed to be Wyndham took off his hat, and revealed the face of his sister Magdalene.

CHAPTER XVII.

WE now return to the apartment in the house of the Jew, where his daughter, Isabel Rachel, was detained a prisoner by her brother.

The young girl, for a few hours, bore her compulsion of detention with equanimity. But as the hours went on she became impatient, then indignant. At length her brother appeared. She received him coldly and silently.

"Well, Rachel, I hope you are subdued and humbled. No reply.

"I trust that by this time you consent to give up your heretical faith in the dead Jew of Nazareth."

"Never; no, never, brother. As long as I live I will trust in him."

"There have been martyrs, girl."

"And there may be more."

Marks Moncure regarded her with feelings of the profoundest surprise and hatred. But her brightening eyes, her firm tones, and fearless look, awed him.

"I see you are a fanatic, Rachel. Let it pass. I feel I cannot cope with you. The devil seems to have got into my family. There was Israel, who died a Nazarene. I know not what the world is coming to."

"Is it any marvel Jews should be Christians? Was not Jesus a Jew—a son of Abraham? Were not his twelve disciples Jews? Was not the first Christian Bishop a Jew—James of Jerusalem? Were not the first Christians Jews? Did not Jesus perform most of his miracles on Jews?"

"Enough. I see that you are thoroughly poisoned. Let that pass, then. I have one more point to present to you. Will you marry young Mr Levi?"

"No."

"Are you in earnest?"

"Yes."

"Do you refuse because he is a Jew? Are you so far lost as that?"

"No; my father is a Jew. I cannot despise them. My brother is also a Jew, and my mother a Jewess."

"What, then, is the reason you refuse Levi?"

"Has he even asked my hand? I know him not."

"Then know him," answered her brother; and going to the door, he opened it, and ushered in the young South Carolina Israelite.

The handsome and elegantly attired young Israelite bowed to the very ground; but his face expressed surprise, evidently at being so suddenly presented; for he had no idea that he should see Rachel in her brother's room. Marks Moncure had brought him home to introduce him to his sister, and said, as he entered the house: "She is probably in my study, where I left her. I will go up and see. Follow me, and if she will see you there, I will admit you." He stood, therefore, without in the hall, and heard nothing of the conversation between the brother and sister within. Coldly and distantly she received him, and by her haughty indifference repulsed him. He felt, as he expressed it afterward, as if he had come suddenly upon an iceberg, the atmosphere about her was so chilly. In acknowledging his presence, Rachel did not speak. She felt indignant that her brother should have brought him, concealing from him that she was a prisoner.

"Pardon me, Miss Moncure," said Levi, with embarrassment, for he was an ingenuous and right-hearted young man. "I fear I have intruded. I requested your brother to let me wait in the drawing-room."

"My brother is aware that this is the only room in which I have the power to receive you." This was spoken with a pointed irony felt only by the brother. He approached her and said, in a low tone:

"Sister, do not reveal all. I am sure he loves you. Be lady like and discreet. You will never do better. He is rich and amiable."

"I will not forget that I am a lady, though I am a prisoner. I am glad you have arrived safely at New York, sir," she said, turning to the young Jew; "it is a rough sea-trip from Charleston. I trust your visit to New York will be very agreeable."

"I thank you, Miss Moncure. Permit me to say that its agreeable character will depend wholly upon the success of a mission upon which I have come."

"I have heard of Charleston as a very beautiful city," she said, waiving any direct reply; for she perfectly understood what the nature of his mission was.

"It is a fair city. You would like it very much. It possesses one peculiar feature. There, families of the wealthiest Jews mingle with the best society it affords. A lady of cultivation like yourself, Miss Moncure, would be received there with marked attention."

While he was speaking, Marks Moncure quietly withdrew; but was careful softly to lock the door, both upon his prisoner and Mr Levi.

"I will give Levi every chance," he said to himself.

"I am glad to hear that the South Carolinians are above the prejudices which here and elsewhere govern the opinions of Christian society against the Jews. Although we are a nation without a country, we are a nation of great and intellectual men. Every kingdom of Europe and the East have Jews among their wisest councillors; and even in the United States, Jews of eminence have sat in the Congress of the Republic, and exerted a powerful influence in the Union."

"You speak eloquently and truthfully," answered Mr Levi.

"I do not wish to be flattered for truth and eloquence, sir. I am a Jewess, and am proud of my nation."

She spoke truly; for though at heart changed in faith, she was not less a Jewess in pride of feeling. She felt that Paul was no less a Jew for being a Christian.

"I rejoice to hear you say so. You confirm my opinion of you. Before I left home it was whispered that I might find you less a Jewess than I wished; for we had heard of your brother's dying a Nazarene, and that you were influenced by his death-bed. The news came to me by a letter from your brother. But I rejoice to hear you say so unreservedly that 'you are a Jewess and proud of your nation.' I have now nothing to prevent me from making known the reason of my visit to you. You are aware that, according to the custom of our people, our parents have betrothed us. From a mere youth I have looked forward to marrying you, fair Rachel."

"It is true my father has recently informed me of such a betrothal; but I cannot marry you."

He stood transfixed. He became very pale. He looked overwhelmed with distress. His fine countenance was eloquent with anguish and mortification. He drew near and took her hand, respectfully and gently, yet deprecatingly.

"Miss Moncure, you know not with what secret joy I have looked forward to this hour of meeting you. The beautiful fabric of my happiness which I have upreared, crowned by your love, falls a wreck to earth."

She looked up and saw that his eyes glittered with tears. She was moved; what maiden, with a heart, would not have been? She answered:

"Mr Levi, I thank you for your love for me. I regret, for your sake, that I cannot respond to it. Go, and make some other maiden happy."

"Never! Unless I marry you, I shall never love again. My heart will perish like a withered flower. One word more. Is it that another stands between me and thee, Rachel?"

"Yes."

This was said with depressed eyes and trembling lips.

"May I know who the happy lover is?" he asked, quietly.

"No;" firmly, but still with down-falling lids, was this answer given.

"Enough; I respect you too much to press upon your secret further."

He took her hand and pressed it to his lips. A tear fell upon it. He approached the door. As he did so, it opened, and her brother appeared, with a countenance pale with rage. He sprung into the middle of the room, a dagger in his hand. In an instant he grasped his sister by the arm, and cried:

"I have listened; I have heard all. You shall die on the spot by my hand, unless you promise, by the oath of God, to be the wife of Levi!"

"Do not kill me, brother. Do not become a murderer," she cried, for she feared instant death at his hands.

"Hold, Moncure! This is not the way to give me a wife," exclaimed the young man, arresting the arm

of the infuriated brother, and wresting the dagger from his grasp, and flinging it across the room. "I cannot take her on any such terms."

"You shall not refuse her. You shall yet have her free consent."

"She has told me, as you say you have overheard, that she loves another. I release her. Do not do violence. I cannot marry her now, even if you compel her to accept me under oath!"

"Not a word more!" said Moncure. He then drew near to his sister, and whispered huskily through his closed teeth: "You shall yet marry him, or I will take your life! The fortunes of our house depend on his money."

"Then the fortunes of the house must fall," she answered. "I cannot sustain them by such a sacrifice."

"We shall see," he answered, and followed Mr Levi from the room; the latter, however, saying:

"Do not fear, Miss Moncure. I will never take advantage of you; unless voluntarily and freely given me, I will never accept your hand. Whatever oath, therefore, may be forced from you, can never have fulfilment if I am to be the other party!"

"Levi," said Marks Moncure, as he heard these words, "this language is enough to make you and me foes. But never fear. My sister will, you may be assured, voluntarily give her consent. By to-morrow it will pass over, and she will receive you with smiles."

The young Carolinian made no reply. He was indignant at the brother's coarse violence, and excusing himself to him left the house. Moncure, however, insisted on accompanying him; for he desired to keep friends with one who might yet be of service to him

and his house with his untold wealth, even if he did not become his brother-in-law.

"You may have thought me rough," he said, apologetically, as Levi walked silently along; "but I know my sister better than you do. She soon succumbs to a threat. I hope you had no idea I meant to kill her?"

"If you had done so, I should have killed you the next moment," answered the Southerner, in a quiet but determined tone.

"Excellent," laughed Moncure. "Capital! I made quite an escape. But it was all a sham on my part, I assure you. The girl loves you, and will consent to marry you."

"She does not love me," was the decided response.

"But one word, Moncure! If I know you to lift a finger in violence toward that girl, I will make you responsible to me with your life!"

Thus speaking, Mr Levi pursued his way alone down the street leaving Mark Moncure standing at the corner, petrified with angry surprise.

"Well, I must put up with him. He is too rich for our house to quarrel with. I fear, however, that it is all up with the marriage; yet not if I can help it. My sister must come round, or—"

Poor Rachel listened until the retreating footsteps assured her she was alone, and then for a few moments gave vent to tears. As she dried her eyes, she said:

"Noble, honourable, and good he is! But my heart is in the prison with the equally noble and honourable Wyndham; for I am sure he is innocent. His misfortunes have only increased my devotion to him. Oh, that I could aid him—assist him in escaping,

for he may, being innocent, be sacrificed! But I ought also to try and effect my own liberation. I fear my brother's return in the silence of night.

After Rachel had for some time paced her room, deliberating some way of escaping from her dangerous brother's power, she suddenly stopped, and said, with animation:

"I have it!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

HAVING resolved to effect her escape, and decided where to go when she should get safely into the street, Rachel proceeded to put her plans into execution. It was now very near night, and about the very hour in which Spinker was arrested in his hiding-place, that Rachel began to carry out her projects of self-emancipation. Going to her brother's wardrobe, she selected a complete suit of his clothes, boots, cap, and gloves, and all; and, after some time, successfully transformed her outward appearance into that of a young lad.

By this time it was near twilight. She now proceeded to construct a rope by tearing the sheets, and also the curtains, into strips, and firmly tying them together in hard knots. As the darkness came on, she had completed a strong cord, one end of which she secured firmly to a foot of the heavy armour, and the other she cautiously dropped out of the window until it nearly reached the top of a shed beneath it. She now waited until it should be perfectly dark, and then committed herself to the rope, and descended swiftly and surely. Gaining the shed, she dropped to the ground as lightly as a fawn; and, flying down the

alley, in a few moments reached a public thoroughfare thronged with people hastening to and fro.

"Now for Mrs Wyndham's as rapidly as I can go!"

She soon reached Broadway, and, keeping on the east and most dimly-lighted side, she threaded her way rapidly northwards, until, coming to the cross street on which the mother of Wallace Wyndham lived, she turned down it, with increased confidence in her disguise.

In entering the house of the widow it was necessary to pass the stall of Old Peter. In order to gather courage, and to confirm herself in her self-possession before venturing up stairs, the disguised Jewess stopped a moment at the low door of the blackman's little shop, which was lighted by an awfully smoking lamp. He looked up over his great, round green goggles, and, seeing the young gentleman (as the stranger appeared to be), he said, politely:

"Warlk in, gemman. Want to get ol' Pete to make 'em boots shine, so de young misses see dar bright eyeses in 'em? On'y sixpence de pa'r. Sit down, please, sir."

"No, not just now. I am going to see a widow—Mrs Wyndham, who lives here."

"Ah, yes; nice lady dat, an' nice dar'ter! Coloured folks know white folks better dan white folks know anodder. But dare is a mity sorrow come ober dem. Dey hardly dar lif' up dar heads.

"What is it?" asked Rachel. "What is the sorrow?"

"Don't you know? Dar son, Mars'r Wallace, is spec'ted ob stealin' money out ob de letters in de possum ossif, whar he was de clark. I don' b'lieve he ever did it. Dar is wicked men enuff put it on him.

He couldn't ha' done it, wid such a good modder and sister to bring into misery."

"That is a good man," answered Rachel, taking his hand and pressing it warmly.

Rachel left the shop and hastened to the widow.

The door was opened immediately, but Magdalene started back on seeing the face of a handsome young stranger.

"I have a word to say to you and your mother," said Rachel, who saw she was not recognised.

Magdalene ushered the supposed young man into her mother's room. No sooner had she entered than she took off her slouched hat, saying:

"I am among friends. I need no longer a disguise."

As they saw the rich clusters of curls fall about her neck, and recognized the tones of her womanly voice, and heard her add:

"I am Isabel Rachel! Do you not know me?" they embraced her with joyful surprise.

"Secure the door. Let no sound betray my presence here. I have escaped from a prison to come hither!"

She then briefly told them all that the reader knows, of her difficulties with her brother, of his imprisonment of her, of her refusal of Mr Levi for love of Wallace, and of her brother's menaces, and of her escape.

Need we say that she received immediate sympathy, and promises of all the protection which it was in the power of the two helpless ladies to bestow upon the fair fugitive.

"It is impossible," said his mother, "for me to believe him guilty. I know that the good Lord above will yet bring his innocence to light, and expose his adversaries."

"Wallace was ever so true, and noble, and honourable, and kind to us," said Magdalene; "and I have heard it said that a son who loves his mother and sisters will never, for their sakes, do wrong. I know my brother is clear of this crime. And oh, how do we rejoice that you also think him innocent, and also Mr Ravenel. You should know him; he is so noble and excellent."

"I have heard his sister speak of her brother. She, too, is generous as she is beautiful. What a noble pair, this brother and sister, who seem to interest themselves so in the unfortunate. But how shall I be secure here? This may be the first place my brother will come to seek me in; for he knows, that almost Christian as I am, I would not fly to the shelter of Jewish roofs."

"What can we do?" cried the widow. "All that I can do, I will do. You see our poor habitation. The whole can be seen at a glance. What do you fear if you are taken?"

"The Tribunal of Secret Crimes!" she answered, with a shrinking of her whole figure, and turning pale.

"What is that?" asked Magdalene, with deep interest.

"Do you not know that there exists in all lands, where our people are scattered, a secret society—secret as that of the Masons among Christians? This society is called 'The Tribunal of Judah.' Its judges consist of the most venerable Israelites and chief Rabbis. They meet once a month, at the full of the moon, in a secret hall. They have also an annual solemn meeting at the Feast of the Passover. In this court of the elders of Israel—in this secret Sanhedrim—are formally

accused, tried and condemned, all renegade Israelites; all who become Christians; all who fall into infidelity, or in any way depart from the faith of their fathers. This court has a fearful power committed to it, and it is fearlessly though secretly exercised. My brother has menaced me with this dread tribunal!"

"How can it harm you? How can it exist in this country?" asked Magdalene.

"I know not. There are fearful tales of the secret judgment upon heretics, and more secret execution thereof upon the recreant Jews who have been accused before the tribunal. Fathers have accused daughters and sons; and children, parents; and wives, husbands; and husbands, wives; and dear friends, dear friends. The reason is, that Jews would rather see their own flesh and blood die by tortures in the faith than die Nazarenes! Thus, you see what I have to fear."

"Are you sure there is such a tribunal in America?"

"I am told so. I hear it talked of. It may not be that it exists in New York; but how readily could I be taken to such a tribunal in Europe, where the chief court exists, some say in Germany, some in Portugal. But I fear my brother. If I fall into his hands I shall die."

Scarcely had she spoken these words, ere the door opened, and her brother appeared. He was accompanied by two police-officers.

"There is the person who got into my room and stole my clothes. I told you I should find him here," said Marks Moncure, savagely.

"Brother," cried Rachel, "do not have me arrested by these men. Remember I am your sister."

"A woman!" cried the police-officers, in a breath.

"Yes; I am a woman—his sister."

"Is this true?"

"Yes. The girl has a lover, who is a convict. She stole my clothes to meet him; no doubt to aid his escape. Help me to convey her home, and I will reward you. She is my sister. I did not wish to reveal the shame."

"Oh, I will go at once, brother, only not with these rough men," she cried, as they were about to lay hands on her. She then rushed back to where Mrs Wyndham stood, and said, quietly:

"My brother will lock me up again, until he sends me to the Tribunal; send to Mr Ravenel, and tell him what straits I am in. If possible, secure Wallace's release. He would risk everything to save me. Mr Ravenel may not do anything; for what am I to him? Tell Wallace that I am perishing for his aid."

It was in an inner room where she had requested the officers to permit her to retire to resume her feminine dress, that she had time to speak these words.

"Oh, how can my son aid you?" asked the widow.

"Let Magdalene go to-morrow to his prison, veiled, and exchange dresses with him. Such things have been done, and may be done again with success. You, Magdalene, remain, and let him go forth free. Once free, he will, with the money he can raise on these jewels, secure my liberty; for he is a brave man, and nothing can stand between his determined will and its execution."

"Come, Rachel, you are too long in there."

Rachel now came out, no longer dressed as a young man, but in the apparel she had brought with her.

When the officers saw her they stood back with surprise and doubt.

"You see, men, that I was right. I knew by a sort of instinct I should find her here. And finding you here, Rachel," he added, addressing her, "shows me that my suspicions with regard to you and Wyndham were well founded, since you seek his mother's house." But I will keep you safe enough for a while.

Half an hour afterward she was once more safely locked up in a room in her father's residence, for with him, as with all other true Jews, the claims of love and affection and paternity were to be regarded as inferior to the higher obligations demanded of them as Israelites of the grand and sacred Sanhedrin.

Thus had the escape of Rachel ended in a severer and more terrible imprisonment; for instead of being under the jailorship of an angry brother, she was now a victim awaiting the judgment of the mysterious council of the nation.

CHAPTER XIX.

It was with tears both of indignation and grief that Magdalene and her mother saw their fair friend carried away a prisoner.

Scarcely had the rattle of the carriage-wheels ceased, ere Magdalene said:

"Mother, I am but a weak, poor girl; but Wallace, who is so brave and noble, and who loves her so much, could rescue her if he were free. Miss Moncure has given me the idea, and inspired me with the hope of success."

The next morning, a hackney-coach stood at the

entrance of the little alley; Magdalene came forth closely veiled, and wearing a large shawl. With a hurried step she sprang into the carriage, and ordered it to drive to the City Prison.

Half an hour afterward, she was admitted to the cell in which her brother was confined. It was a happy meeting as they remained for a moment clasped in each other's embrace.

"Do you bring any bad news? How is dear mother?" he asked, anxiously.

"Well, but sad, brother."

"And Miss Moncure! Have you heard from her?"

"Yes, and it is on her account I have come."

"Where is she? You speak as if something had happened to her."

"Listen to me. Isabel Moncure is in great peril."

"Where? How?" he cried, with animation.

His sister then made known to him all she had suffered from her brother, and how she had refused the opulent Mr Levi, and had thereby drawn additional persecution upon her head from Marks Moncure. She related how her life had been attempted by his hand, and that he threatened her so fearfully that he would yet destroy her, that, making a rope of the bed-linen, she had escaped from the window, and fled to their house in the disguise of a young man. She continued her narrative by stating how her brother had followed and arrested her, and that she was now once more in his power, and menaced with some dreadful fate.

Wallace listened with mingled emotions of indignation, sympathy, and alarm for her.

"Now, brother, it was her last words to me to try

and effect your escape, that you might come and save her. For that purpose she placed a purse in my hands to meet any expenses you might incur in trying to effect her release."

"Isabel knows I would die for her, if that would save her. But what can I do for a captive, being myself a prisoner?"

"You will not be a prisoner long, Wallace, if you will follow the plan I have to propose, and which Isabel first suggested, saying you must not refuse, if you love her."

"Love her? My heart is hers, but what can I do?"

"Exchange dresses with me, for I am dressed in your clothes under it. Now, you assume my dress and bonnet, shawl and veil, and give me your coat, and vest, and hat; and you can then depart without suspicion, by walking gently and keeping your veil down closely, as if in grief."—"And you?"

"I will stay here, and be a prisoner in your place."

"They will punish you, or in some way insult you when discovered."

"No. They cannot keep me when they find out who it is. I will put on this extra dress as soon as I feel you are safe, and let them know the whole."

"I cannot consent. You are a noble girl, my dear sister. But I cannot leave the prison. I feel that I could do so with a probable chance of success; but—"

"Do you forget Isabel Rachel?"

"What shall I do?"

"Change attire with me, and fly to her rescue. She told me she should at first be found in some room at home. She will thence, perhaps, be sent to some other place, perhaps over the sea to Portugal; for her

father came from there. You must act promptly. I have come here to give you a chance to save her."

"Whither shall I take her? What refuge have I?"

"That is already secured by me. Early this morning, before coming here, I went to the house of Miss Ravenel. I had an interview with her. She said that you should find a shelter at her house, that her brother was then out, but he would confirm all that she did."

"Excellent. Now the plan looks less Quixotic and more practical. Do you say that Isabel places all her hopes in me?"

"Yes. She dare trust no one else. If you fail her, I know not what will become of her."

"Did you explain to Miss Ravenel your plan for releasing me from prison?"

"Yes; and she approved of it; for she says that you ought not to be here, as she and her brother are convinced of your innocence. Don't let Isabel remain in prison because you refuse to leave yours."

"I will do as you say, though my conscience tells me I am placing myself in a wrong position."

In a few minutes, the twofold exchange then was made; and after Magdalene had made her brother cross the room to see how he walked, and having arranged the veil for him as he ought to keep it, she called to the turnkey:

"Come, sir; I wish to go now."

The man came and unlocked the door.

Wallace then passed out, and safely reached the outer gate. The hackman then drove to the house of Mrs Wyndham, and in a few minutes Wallace was in the embrace of his joyful mother.

Time was too precious for him to delay longer than to answer briefly her questions. He at once proceeded to invest himself in his suit of sailor clothes—which he had laid aside—and his mother brought the whiskers and mustache which Isabel had thrown aside on resuming again her feminine attire when arrested by her brother.

"How shall I get into the house here in open day? I remember the name of the servant who used to let me in. I will trust to my disguise, and go to the door boldly. He has a brother a sailor. I will see what my wits can bring out of this."

In a few moments he was ringing at Mr Moncure's door. It was opened by a Jewish woman, a good-natured house-servant, instead of the footman.

"Is Mr Moncure at home?" he asked.

"No; at his bank."

"Is his son at home?"

"Yes. What do you want?"

"To pay him some money."

"Come in and sit in the hall till I tell him."

"Never mind, let me pay it to you," he said, quickly, discovering the avaricious glitter of her eyes as she fixed them upon the money; "you can give it to him when you have done with it."

The woman looked puzzled. He made a bold dash.

"Here are fifty dollars. If you can keep a secret, it shall be yours."

"I can!" was the prompt reply.

"From everybody?"

"Yes."

"Well, I know a young gentleman who loves your young mistress. If you could get him a chance to

“speak a word to her, without her father or brother knowing it, the fifty is yours.”

“Don’t talk so loud. I’ll take the gold. But come in. Come back here, into this small room. I can talk to you there, Mr Wyndham!”

Wallace started. He saw he was recognized by her. He was about to retreat, when she said:

“Don’t fear. I know all about who loves her. I am her friend, but I dare do nothing alone. I am glad you are here, because you can do something. Walk softly, for her brother is up in his room. Ah, there have been sad troubles. Miss Isabel refuses to marry a man her brother and Mr Moncure want her to marry; and they have shut her up in the room where he keeps his safe and bank-books, and there she is a prisoner!”

“How can you aid me? Every moment is full of peril. We have not an instant to lose, for we may be interrupted by her brother.”

“I have a carriage a few doors off. I have a safe refuge for her. Let us act at once. What will you first do?”

“Go into her room. There is another key that fits it. If Mr Marks can be avoided, all will be easy enough, as she will only have to follow me down. Remain here. He never comes into this place.”

Thus speaking, the thin and dark-featured Jewish servant left him. For a moment he felt suspicious. But he resolved to preserve his confidence in her and his courage, and suffer nothing to defeat the purpose on which he had come.

The fair Rachel was in her prison, which was rather a closet than a room which opened from her father’s.

She was seated upon the iron chest, which contained a vast amount of treasure. She sat sadly and pensively, her eyes fixed upon the floor. She knew her father was away; but that her brother was left in the house as her jailor.

He had, however, changed his tone and manner from a menacing to an entreating one; for he found hers was a spirit that would ever resist force, and that gentleness would be more likely to succeed than severity. Yet he was firm in assuring her, that if, in three days, she did not make up her mind to write to Mr Levi a note consenting to become his wife, she would be punished by the Great Council for being a renegade to her faith.

"Such a council dare not sentence me in this free land," she had answered her brother. "It can only degrade me from all rights as a Jewess, and forbid any Jew to give me 'fire or water, bread or bed'; but it has no power of life or death."

"No, not in America; but in Portugal the Tribunal is in full authority, though secret. You will be sent there if you are contumacious."

"And what can they do with me there?" she asked, turning pale as death.

"That no one knows. They keep all their acts as secret as the Tribunal of the Inquisition. Only this I know, that those on whom final judgment is passed are seen no more by human eyes."

Rachel clasped her hands and shuddered. Her brother left her. After a few moments she cried:

"Oh, for a friend—for Wallace—to deliver me from the dangers to which I am exposed—and for him and the holy faith he holds."

Sh remained some time silently reflecting upon situation, when she heard a faint noise at her do. Silently it opened, and the woman Leah stood with her room.

"O, Leah!"

"Hist!" she cried, with her finger on her lips. "have come to aid your escape. Mr Wyndham is in th house. He awaits you in the cloak room, dressed a a sailor. I have brought your hat and shawl. Follow me at once, if you would escape!"

"Where is my brother?"

"In his room. He cannot leave it. I have turned the key upon him. Fly instantly, before he finds he is locked in, and attempts to break out!"

Trembling with joy and haste, Isabel flew down the stairs, scarcely touching one step in three. Wallace met her at the foot, and with a cry of happiness sh caught his hands. At this, a loud uproar was heard above at the door of young Moncure's room. He had heard the cry, and recognised the voice of his sister, and, finding his door locked, had burst it open. First, he ran to her prison, which, finding open, and its late occupant nowhere to be seen, he descended the stairs in pursuit. The Jewess, in her alarm, fled down into the area, leaving the lovers in the hall trying to escape by the street door, of which the woman had taken out the key when she had locked it. In a moment, Marks Moncure was by his sister's side, and had seized her arm, not recognising Wyndham, who at once sprang upon him and disengaged his hold.

"Do not kill him, Wallace. He is my brother!"

"It is that infernal Wyndham in disguise, then, who is moving off with you," he cried, almost frantic

With rage; and drawing his stiletto, he aimed a blow at his breast.

"Be not alarmed. I will not harm your brother," said Wallace, as he threw his strong arm about the slight form of the elegant young Jew, and wrenched the weapon from his grasp. He then held it over him and said:

"Swear to me that you will not pursue your sister. She is going to an honourable retreat. She flies from tyranny to a friend who loves and will protect her with life, if need be!"

"You are a villain! I will take no such oath!"

"Then I must secure you. I must protect the sure escape of Miss Moncure from a tyrant brother. In order that you may not give alarm, I will bind this gold sheath of your dagger across your mouth with your handkerchief. Nay, it must be done. I am, you see, stronger than you are. Isabel, secure the key!"

With these words, he firmly sealed his mouth, and then tying him to the baluster of the stairs, he took the key from Isabel, who had got it from Leah, and, opening the front door, both disappeared into the street. They soon reached the residence of Ravenel, when Kate, with joyful surprise, received them both, and gave them all the protection that was in her power.

"But," she said, after she had heard the story of Isabel, and also of Wallace's escape; "we will wait till Guy, my brother, comes. He will soon be here. He will advise us all what to do. I am so happy you are both free, and especially Mr Wyndham, that you are no longer a prisoner in those dreadful 'Tombs.'"

CHAPTER XX.

WE now return to Ravenel. When he discovered, instead of Wallace, his sister in the 'Tombs,' his surprise was unbounded. He saw at a glance how matters stood.

"I am sorry, very sorry, that you have prevailed on your brother to escape, and surprised he should—being innocent, as he is now believed to be—have yielded to your sisterly influence; for I suppose, Miss Wyndham, that you planned his escape."

"I did, Mr Ravenel; but do not blame Wallace! I will tell you all."

When he heard the interesting story of the imprisonment and persecution of Isabel, and how Wallace loved her, and how nothing would have induced him to leave but the hope of giving her her liberty, he said, frankly:

"I do not see how it could have been otherwise, then. Yet, I regret I could not have been here an hour earlier. As it is, he has laid himself open to suspicion that he is really guilty. Where did he go?"

"First home to disguise himself, and then he intended to hasten to Mr Moncure's house."

"I fear he will get into great trouble; and you, too, who, for a brother and a friend, have exposed yourself to such dangers. Here comes the keepers with the chief warden to see about the escape! But I will meet them, and protect you. They will be very angry, but they will not dare to lay a finger upon you. Retire to the back of the prison. I will face them, and plead your cause!"

It was fortunate that just such a man as Ravenel

met them. While they felt annoyed at being deceived by her, they could not but admire the success of her stratagem. And as Ravenel showed to the warden the order which the Recorder had written for Wallace's release, the warden said, smiling:

"Well, he has only forestalled his time a little. So we'll make no noise about it, but let him go, as if regularly discharged on the order. The young lady well deserves her brother's liberty."

At Mrs Wyndham's they learned that Wallace had come, disguised himself, and gone, hoping to rescue Isabel. The widow did not hesitate to go in the carriage with Mr Ravenel, and soon they reached the door of his mansion.

What pen can describe the happiness of the meeting of the parties there assembled. Mrs Wyndham with joy embraced her son and Isabel; Ravenel shook Wallace heartily by the hand as Magdalene fell, first on her brother's shoulder, and then was folded in the arms of the grateful Isabel. Ravenel also made them all happy by saying that no pursuit would be made of Wallace, but that the warden suffered him to remain at freedom; but he advised him to return, for form's sake, and surrender, in order to receive his honourable release. This Wallace at once resolved to do with Ravenel; and they departed together in the carriage. On the way, Ravenel informed Wallace of the facts he had gathered about the guilt of Spinker, and of his imprisonment; and Wallace, after expressing his gratitude to his friend, informed him how he had managed to effect Isabel's escape.

"I must see that young gentleman, and his father, too," said Ravenel. "I hope I shall be able to effect

a peace at least. I know him well; for we are on the same bank directory. It will be important for you to have him your friend. As for the brother, it matters not so much, as he is very weak."

The warden was not a little pleased to see his prisoner again, and after locking him in (for form's sake) a minute, he released him honourably; and the matter, at first so grave-looking, ended with pleasantry.

The two gentlemen now drove to the house of Mr Moncure. Wallace sat in the carriage. Ravenel rung at the door. It was opened by the Jewish woman, who, as soon as Isabel and Wallace had got clear away, came up from below stairs, as if just hearing the noise; and seeing the young gentleman tied and gagged, set up the most natural outcries of wonder and alarm. Without delay, she released him, when without suspecting her, he began to pour out the most violent invectives against Wyndham and his sister. He was about to rush out and give the alarm, when she said, sagaciously:

"If Miss Rachel has run away with a Christian, I would not let the world know it, for the disgrace of the thing to us all. Perhaps she will come back again. I would keep it a secret as long as I could."

Her words seemed to have their effect upon him. But with all his philosophy he did not delay to make his way down to the city, to inform his father of what had transpired. But Mr Moncure had left the bank sometime before, having heard from Colonel —, the postmaster, how that Spinker had been arrested, and the innocence of Wyndham, his *protégé*, established. Rejoiced to hear this, the old gentleman hastened to

the Recorder's office to learn all the particulars and have the account fully confirmed. He at length returned home just as Ravenel was at his door, and met him on the steps.

"O, Mr Ravenel, I am truly glad to be honoured with a call from you. To what fortunate circumstance do I owe this pleasure?"

"I came to see you on a little private business," said Mr Ravenel.

"He knows of my daughter being locked up, I dare say, and comes about her—as I hear his sister and Rachel are friends."

These were the thoughts which passed through his mind. He, however, courteously invited Mr Ravenel in.

The interview lasted three quarters of an hour—all the while Wallace waiting in the carriage, and wondering what the result would be. At length the door opened, and Ravenel appeared and called to Wallace, saying:

"Come in, Wyndham. Mr Moncure sends his compliments."

"By what magic have you done this?" he asked, as he ascended the steps.

"It is no matter. Meet him as if nothing had happened. He is, as before, your friend. I have had a hard time to bring matters round, but I have succeeded. Fortunately, he took a great liking to you in the beginning; and now that you are proven innocent, by the arrest of the real robber, he feels ready to forgive you running off with his daughter."

"What! does he know it?"

"Yes, and all else, and where she is."

Mr Moncure now met him, with a smile and extended hand, saying:

"Well, sir, I am glad you are innocent. But I don't like your stealing my daughter! I know the whole story. She is, too, a Christian, and no Jew will marry her. I have given Mr Ravenel my consent that you shall marry, and I now repeat it to you."

Wallace could scarcely restrain his emotion.

"Tut, tut! I don't want to be thanked. I don't give her to you so cordially as you would like, I dare say; but there is no help for it. Come, sir, I have promised to dine with Mr Ravenel."

They were, the three, soon in the carriage, on their way to the residence of Ravenel. But as Mr Moncure suddenly recollected that he had expected Mr Levi to dine with him that day, he requested permission of Ravenel to stop at his hotel, and excuse himself. The young Charlestonian, out of respect to the old gentleman, at once descended to the carriage to recognize the reception of the message. Mr Moncure presented him; but scarcely had he time to finish the introduction, when both young gentlemen grasped hands through the carriage window, calling one another by name most cordially.

"Why, then, you know each other?" said Mr Moncure, who was gratified and surprised.

"We ought to, sir," said Ravenel, "since we travelled weeks together in Italy, and Switzerland, and on the Lake Maggiore. Mr Levi saved me from drowning. Now, my friend, you must get into the carriage, and come and dine with me. Mr Moncure is to be my guest. I wish to talk over the few days we passed so pleasantly together."

It did not require much urging on the part of Ravenel to get his friend's consent, and as he was already dressed for dinner at Mr Moncure's, he had nothing to do but to take a seat in the carriage with Ravenel.

The surprise of Isabel on seeing her father and Mr Levi would have overcome her with terror, if the former had not approached her instantly with a smiling face and extended hand. She flung herself into his arms, crying:

"Do you forgive me?"

"Yes, if you will love me half as much after you are married to Mr Wyndham as you now love him."

This was spoken with pleasantry, and, between smiles and tears, she turned to receive the polite and respectful bow of Mr Levi; to whom, however, she extended her hand. He was then introduced to Wallace, whom he cordially congratulated in winning the heart of one he himself had sought in vain.

"You did not come soon enough, sir," said Mr Moncure, naively.

Kate now entered, and Ravenel presented her to Mr Levi, of Charleston, as his friend, of whom she had heard him so often and gratefully speak. Kate Ravenel frankly gave him her hand, and smiling upon him with mingled feelings of gratitude and pleasure, said:

"I know of no one, Mr Levi, whom I have so much desired to meet with as yourself. I hope that you will remain in New York some time, and that you will be often our guest."

"Not often, but wholly," said Ravenel. "I shall send to the hotel for your baggage, and you must

make my house your home while you are in the city."

It need not be said that our young southerner gladly accepted an invitation which was seconded by the sister, whose brilliant eyes had already begun to kindle a flame in his heart.

And why should they not both be lovers, both being heart-free? He had not loved Isabel, only admired her, and would have married her because she was beautiful, and it was the wish of his father. Both, therefore, were without preferences. He had generously yielded his claims to Isabel's hand when he found she had no heart to give him; and now he beheld in the superb sister of his friend, one who, already known to him through Guy's description of her when they were in Europe together, had at her first glance captivated his imagination and disturbed the serenity of his deeper emotions.

But will an American girl marry an Israelite?

True, Mr Levi is an Israelite, but he is also an American by birth. This is his only country. In faith, he is a Jew; but in nation, he is as much an American as the Anglo Saxon; and shall mere difference of faith bar the inter-communion of souls? and shall the altar be a wall insurmountable between lovers who worship God in different ways? Does not the educated Jew rise to the highest counsels of the nations of the earth, and even sit in the Senate of the Republic? Love knows no barriers such as superstition raises; the individuality of the Jew ought to be merged in his nationality; and the time will come when the phrase, "He is a Jew," spoken of Israelites born in the United States, will be lost and unknown

in the comprehensive and general term, "He is an American citizen." The day is past when the Jew, as such, is despised; for in this country of religious liberty, no man should be condemned merely for his creed!

Behold now the tableau of the assembling together in one house of our chief characters! At the head of the dinner-table presided Kate, dressed with elegance and taste. On her right, Mr Moncure; and on her left, Mrs Wyndham: one the father of Isabel, the other the mother of Wallace Wyndham: the happy lovers who now sat side by side below Mr Moncure, Isabel next to her father. Opposite sat Mr Levi; and next below him, at the corner, the lovely Magdalene; while close by, at the foot of the table, sat Ravenel, *vis-à-vis* to his sister.

Leaving this octave of our characters to the enjoyment of the hour, and to that unreserved conversation which gradually cleared up to each and all everything that had remained inexplicable, we will take the reader to the prison where Spinker paced to and fro in his cell. It is the same, to which he has been removed, as that occupied by Wallace. He feels that his own crimes have brought him into his present situation, and he therefore could derive no patience or hope from that consciousness of innocence which had sustained the manly and virtuous Wyndham under the same condemnation. But there was, instead, feelings of hatred against Wallace, Billy, the woman Maggie, the officers who had arrested him, the Justice who remanded him, and especially against Ravenel. Curses deep and savage he muttered against each of these, menacing vengeance if he should ever get free!

There was no remorse for what he had done. He did not once reflect that, as an immortal being, he had lived his time on earth in folly and waste of it, in seeking the gratification of his passion and vanities; and instead of making the world better for having come into it, he made it, so far as he could as an individual, a worse world than before.

At length the day of trial arrived. He was brought into court holding down his head for shame, not of his guilt, but for being publicly exposed to the eyes of all the "fast young men" of his class, who thronged the court-room.

Ravenel and Wallace were also there, the latter as a witness in reference to his innocent agency in getting the check cashed. He gave his testimony clearly and satisfactorily. Billy was also there, to testify, and his statement not only fully corroborated the narrative of Wallace, but revealed fully Spinker's guilt. The pie-woman was also there, and bore witness that she had often seen Spinker, after asking for hot water, go into her back room, and open letters and take out money and seal them again.

In a word, the proofs of his guilt were overwhelming, and the innocence of Wyndham so clearly established, that the crowd, led by some one, gave three groans for Spinker, and three cheers for Wyndham, before the court could suppress these demonstrations of detestation and applause. The Federal Judge then made a handsome and brief complimentary address to Wallace, regretting that he should have suffered imprisonment, being innocent, which filled his mother's heart with joy; for she also was there with all other friends of Wallace.

The Jury did not leave their boxes to discuss their decision; but the Foreman, rising, gave in his verdict: "Guilty!"

This verdict was, however, only upon the case of robbing the mail. The sentence was ten years in the State Prison. Spinker hearing it, groaned heavily, and clung to the side of the prisoner's box to prevent falling. There still remained over him the charges of forgery and of an attempt at murder. On both of these he was also to be tried, on being transferred from the Federal power to the State courts.

The result was, Spinker found himself doomed to imprisonment "as long as his life should last." Judge his surprise upon being conveyed to the boat in the black waggon, on beholding, seated opposite to him, the doughty Captain, his friend and second, by whom he had challenged Ravenel. This warlike gentleman had been sentenced three years merely for borrowing, without asking for it, a gold watch of a stranger, who slept in the next room to his, and forgetting to return it!

On the way up to the town, the sight of the prison walls overwhelmed Spinker with despair. Heavily ironed, between two men, as he was, all at once he disengaged himself from their grasp, and cast himself, with a piercing shriek of horror and mortal agony, into the dark depths of the Hudson. His heavy irons carried him to the bottom like an anchor, and though the officers gazed long down into the mysterious depths, only a few bubbles arose to the surface, and then the river flowed on as before—leaving no trace of the execution it had done upon the forger and would-be murderer.

Billy, for his part, as the agent of Spinker, was sent to Blackwell's Island, and thence bound to the House of Correction; but escaping before one year's service was no longer heard of, but probably ended life as he had begun it, as the servant of crime. Nor did Maggie escape a brief imprisonment for permitting her shop to be made use of by Spinker in which to break open letters—she well knowing his business, and receiving money for giving her permission to him. Old Peter was found early one morning, seated on his low leathern-bottomed chair, with a boot half-blackened in his hand, and his polishing-brush resting in the other on one knee. His green spectacles were on his nose, and he seemed to be bending over, asleep; but on being shaken, he was found to be dead. His spirit had flown to its God. The honest old African had been "taken in harness," working hard to the last upon his boots. What will be his employment in heaven? Polishing the golden sandals of angels? Who knows?

As for young Marks Moncure, he felt it his duty to challenge Wallace for the insult he had put upon him; but after he had written a terrible challenge, and was loading his pistols, one of them went off, and with it went off his little finger, at the sight and pain of which, with the stunning report, he felt perfectly satisfied with bloodshed and pistol-shooting. And tearing up the challenge, and putting away his pistols, he, the next morning, left in a steam packet for Europe, drawing on his father for as many thousands as he thought he should be likely to spend in a year abroad, and leaving Isabel and her lover to their happiness.

The same paper which contained, to the surprise of his father, the name of Marks Moncure, Esq., as a passenger on the President, contained also the following hymeneal notices:—

“ Married at Grace Church, this morning, by the Reverend Doctor S——, Guy Ravenel, Esq., to Miss Magdalene Wyndham.

“ Also, by the same, Wallace Wyndham, Esq., to Miss Isabel Rachel Moncure (a converted Jewess), daughter of the wealthy Israelite banker, Solomon Moncure.

“ On the same morning, in the Jewish Synagogue, the parties above named being present, Mr Francis Leon, a wealthy Jewish gentleman, of Charleston, S.C., to Miss Kate Ravenel, only daughter of the late Honourable Edward Ravenel, of this city. Afterward, the ceremony of marriage was repeated in an Episcopal church, each party having selected their own form, and uniting both forms. The three happy bridal parties all leave to-day for Washington and the South on a bridal tour.”

Thus, dear reader, our tale comes naturally to a happy termination. But you will ask how Wallace Wyndham, being so poor, could have married Miss Moncure. By her father making him rich the day before the marriage, by presenting him with a certificate of shares in —— bank (the very bank in which he had cashed the check) for one hundred thousand dollars, and by making him a partner in his bank, under the style of “& Co.”

It will gratify the reader to know that Ravenel, who had heard the whole story of the descent of his bride's mother, Mrs Wyndham (now become the happiest woman in all New York), from Sir Charles Burdett, undertook to inquire into the title; and the very next year visited Europe for the purpose of ascer-

taining the truth of the facts, and verifying the descent of his wife from the noble Earls of Wyndham. But as this investigation is still in progress, we can only hope for its successful termination, as one of the wealthiest maiden ladies in England, of the same lineage, is ready on proof to recognize the claim of the lovely Mrs Ravenel, and invest her daughter, now a fair girl of sixteen, and whose beauty sweetly blends that of Kate Ravenel's and her mother Magdalene's, with the title of "Countess."

The steamer President was never heard of again, and the history of the young Jew of New York was tragically ended in mid-ocean.

THE END.

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